



BATMAN



Featuring:
*"INVITATION
TO A
MURDER!"*

25¢
NO. 267
SEPT.
30430



BATMAN



YOU ARE
CORDIALLY
INVITED
TO ATTEND THE
EXECUTION
OF
THE BATMAN!



SHAZAM!

THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL FIGHTS THE...

MINERVA MENACE!

AUNT MINERVA, LEADING LADY OF THE UNDERWORLD, HATCHES A PLOT TO DOMINATE THE WORLD OF THE FUTURE!

IF THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD RESTS WITH THE CHILDREN, I'LL CONTROL THE CHILDREN!

GREAT IDEA, BUT HOW?

SHUT UP AND LISTEN!

I'LL USE MY MIND CONTROL MACHINE TO CONFUSE THEIR MINDS. WE'LL CAPTURE THE TV STATION AND BROADCAST "CONTROLLED THOUGHTS"! I'LL CONVINCE THEM THAT WHAT THEY LIKE THEY DON'T REALLY LIKE!

BRILLIANT THINKING, AUNT MINERVA!

AUNT MINERVA'S HENCHMEN CAPTURE BILLY BATSON.

MINERVA QUICKLY BEGINS OPERATION "BIG LIE."

YOU DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!

YOU DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!

I DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!

I DON'T LIKE HOSTESS TWINKIES!

WE'VE GOT TO DECONTROL THE CHILDREN'S MINDS. AND LET THEM SAY WHAT THEY REALLY MEAN!

SHAZAM!

AT THE SOUND OF THE MAGIC WORD MYSTIC LIGHTNING STRIKES AGAIN!

THINK FOR YOURSELVES AGAIN, KIDS!

WHAT AM I SAYING? I LOVE HOSTESS TWINKIES!

GOLDEN SPONGE CAKE WITH CREAMY FILLING INSIDE!! WHAT COULD BE MORE DELICIOUS THAN TWINKIES?

THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST MORTAL HAS BEATEN ME AGAIN!

YOU SHOULD'VE BRAINWASHED THE KIDS ABOUT SOMETHING OTHER THAN TWINKIES.

STUDIO B

YEAH, AUNT MINERVA, KIDS LIKE TWINKIES TOO MUCH TO BE FOOLED!



YOU GET A BIG DELIGHT IN EVERY BITE OF HOSTESS® TWINKIES®

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ONE OF THE MOST DEADLY AND TREACHEROUS EPISODES IN THE ANNALS OF THE BATMAN'S ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER!

ENTERTAINMENT WILL BE PROVIDED IN AN UNPREDICTABLE PROGRAM OF MAYHEM AND MYSTERY...

BATMAN

...AS THE CAPED CRUSADER DISCOVERS HIS OWN DEATH WARRANT IN THE GUISE OF AN --

"Invitation to a Murder!"

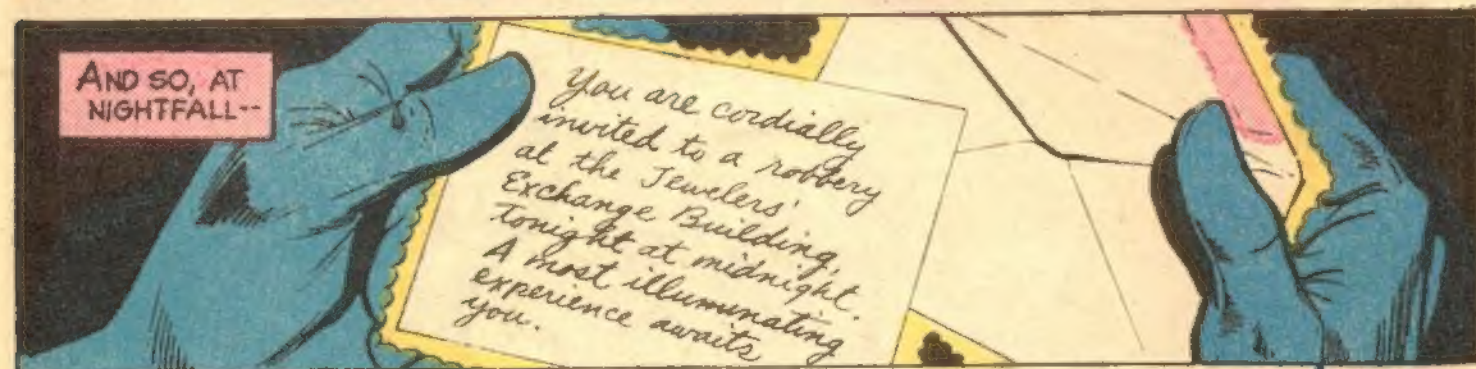
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ART BY: ERNIE CHUA & DICK GIORDANO
EDITED BY: JULIUS SCHWARTZ

5-1987

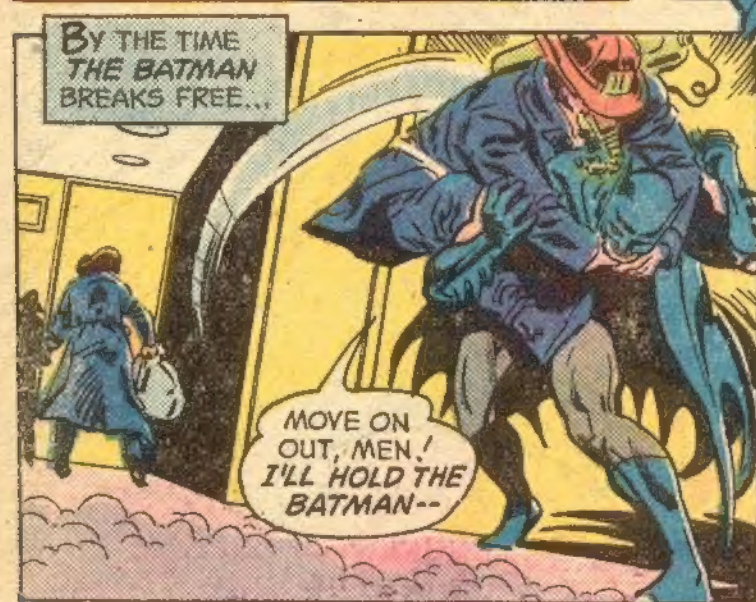
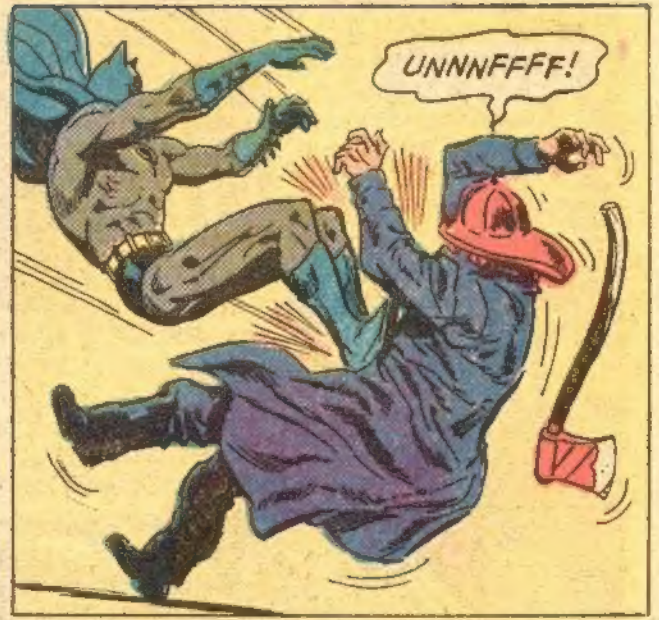
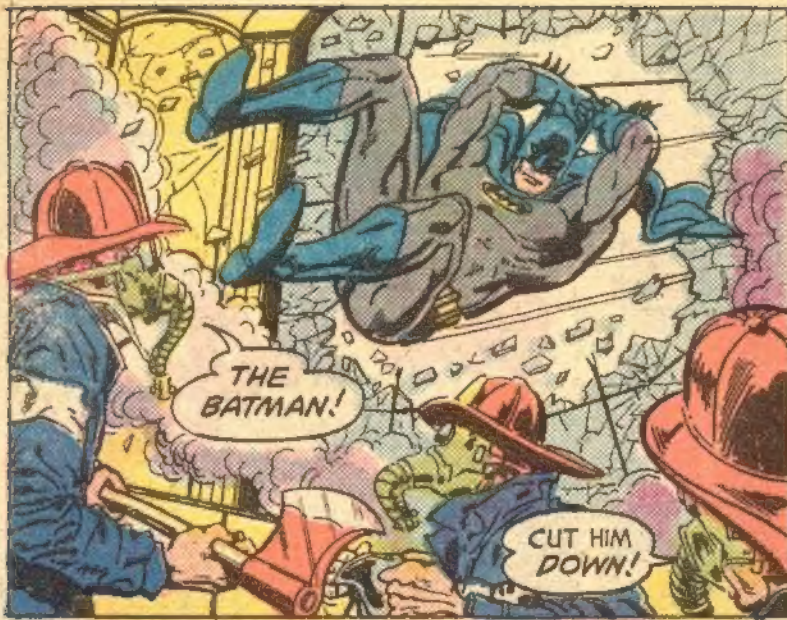
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WHAT TO SINK YOUR TEETH INTO WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY AND YOU'RE NOT A WEREWOLF.

Every now and then, do you get this uncontrollable urge to bite into something that's really got some meat in it?

Are you tired of sugar-sweet snacks that dissolve in your mouth, and crunchy snacks that you can hardly tell you ate, and all the other boring stuff you have to put up with, every day?

Well, take heart. And, while you're at it, take Slim Jim along in your pocket.

Slim Jim is a chewy, all-meat snack that comes in five very un-boring flavors. Mild, spicy, salami, bacon, and pizza. And you can find it at the grocery store. Or at a lot of the places where you've been getting those sissy snacks.

You might want to carry a few extra ones, too. Then, if you meet a werewolf, you can give him something to sink his teeth into instead of you.



A LITTLE LESS THAN A MEAL. A LITTLE MORE THAN A SNACK.

I MADE THIS ELECTRIC GUITAR MYSELF.

WOW!

REAL STRINGS GROOVY!

IT SOUNDS GREAT. PLAY SOMETHING!

UNREAL!

I THINK I'LL MAKE A MICROSCOPE!

Look WHAT YOU CAN MAKE WITH AN ALABE PLAY LAB KIT!

EYES WILL POP AS FRIENDS GASP!

Own something special! 3-string electric "guitar." Camera. Radio. Exciting fun! Best of all, you make it yourself! Friends will be amazed. Think of the admiring glances! Kit contains everything you need! Be the first on your block to get it!

Other Alabe Play Lab Kits • ADJUSTABLE PERISCOPE • PEDOMETER/COUNTER • SURVEYOR'S TRANSIT • MICROSCOPE/PROJECTOR • MIRROR COPIER • ELECTROMAGNETIC TELEGRAPH • DIVING "SUBMARINE" • ELECTRIC "GUITAR" • D.C. ELECTRIC MOTOR • EXPERIMENTAL CAMERA • ASTRONOMICAL TELESCOPE • DIODE RADIO

\$4

Under

ALABE PLAY LAB KITS

Puts fun back into make-it toys.

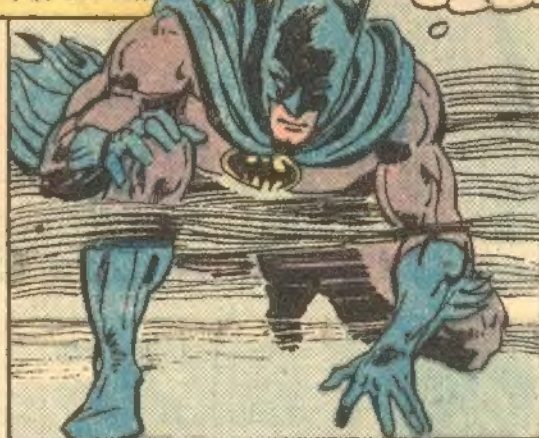
alabe

at your favorite toy, gift, and hobby stores

Alabe Products Inc.
Hollis, New York 11423



ACRID BILLOWS
OF SMOKE
ENVELOP THE
BATMAN...CAUSTIC
FUMES SEAR HIS
EYES AND THROAT
AS HE GROPE FOR
AN EXIT....



CAN'T FIND MY
WAY BACK TO THE
WINDOWS...CAN'T
BREATHE! I FIGURE
I'VE GOT TEN SECONDS
TO GET OUT OF
HERE—



--BUT I'LL
MAKE IT IN
EIGHT!



HE'S
SAFE!

OF COURSE!--
HE'S THE BATMAN!



WHEW!
A CLEAN
GETAWAY
WITH A
MILLION
IN GEMS!

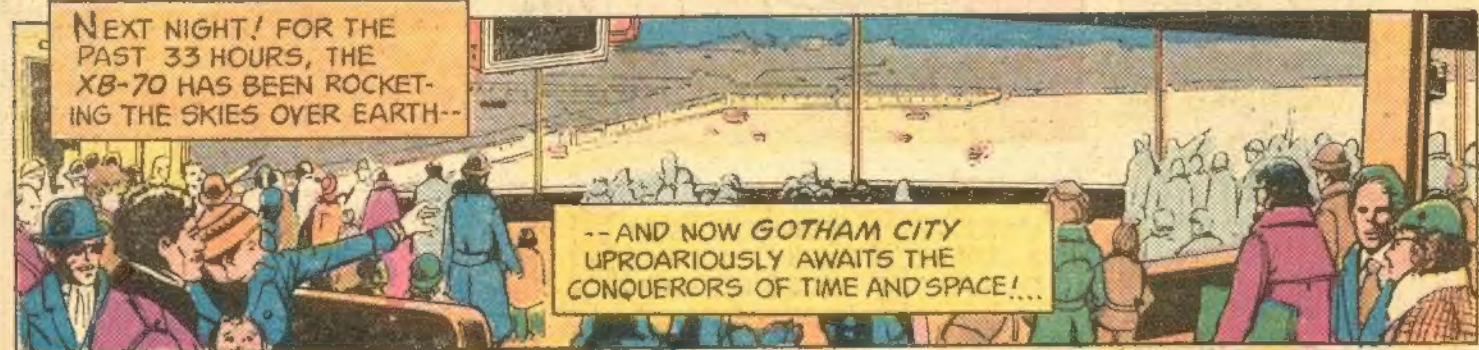
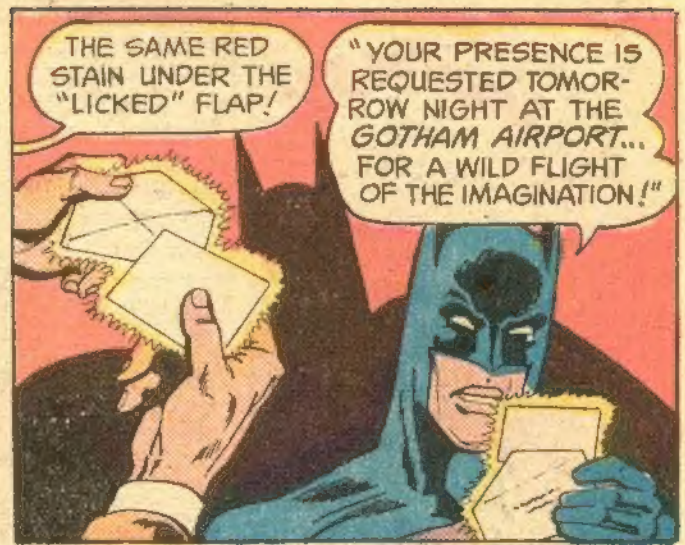
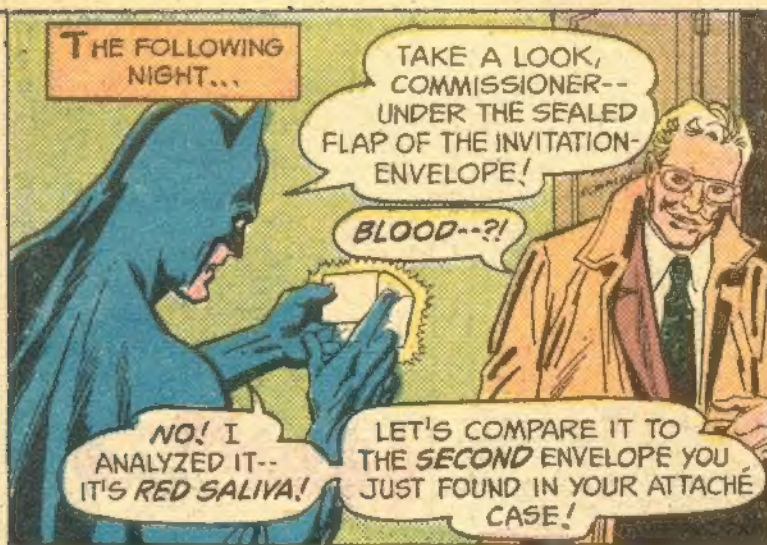
HOW DEVILISHLY
SIMPLE... FIRE-
BOMBS ON A TIME-
FUSE--A FAKED
FIRE TRUCK--THREE
PHONY FIREMEN!

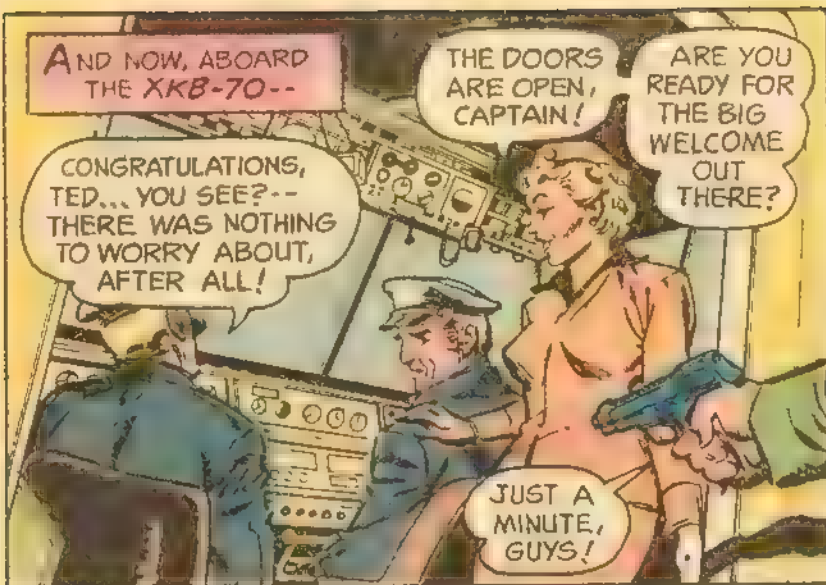
WHAT MADE
YOU SUSPECT
THEM, BATMAN?



THEIR RED
HELMETS!

IN A FIRE OF
THAT MAGNITUDE,
REAL FIRE-FIGHTERS
WOULD NEVER HAVE
GONE IN WITHOUT A
WHITE-HELMETED
OFFICER IN COMMAND!





AND NOW, ABOARD
THE XKB-70--

CONGRATULATIONS,
TED... YOU SEE?--
THERE WAS NOTHING
TO WORRY ABOUT,
AFTER ALL!

THE DOORS
ARE OPEN,
CAPTAIN!

ARE YOU
READY FOR
THE BIG
WELCOME
OUT
THERE?

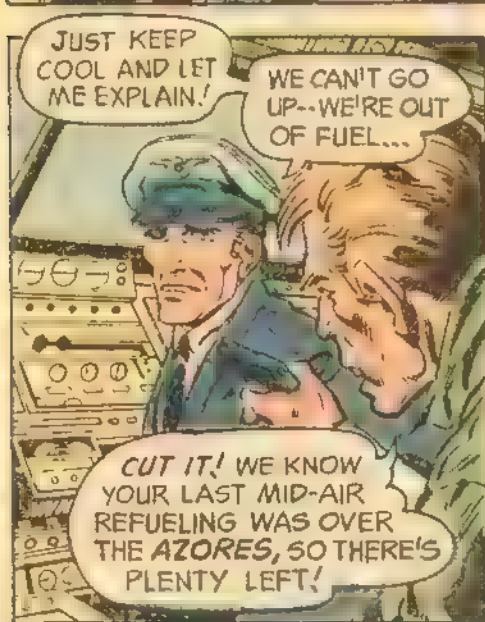
JUST A
MINUTE,
GUYS!



THE
SERVICE
CREW?!

RIGHT! THERE ARE
THREE OF US! ONLY
WE DON'T GIVE SERVICE
--WE GET IT!

NOW, BACK INTO
YOUR SEATS--
YOU'RE TAKING
THIS PLANE UP
AGAIN!



JUST KEEP
COOL AND LET
ME EXPLAIN!

WE CAN'T GO
UP--WE'RE OUT
OF FUEL...

CUT IT! WE KNOW
YOUR LAST MID-AIR
REFUELING WAS OVER
THE AZORES, SO THERE'S
PLENTY LEFT!

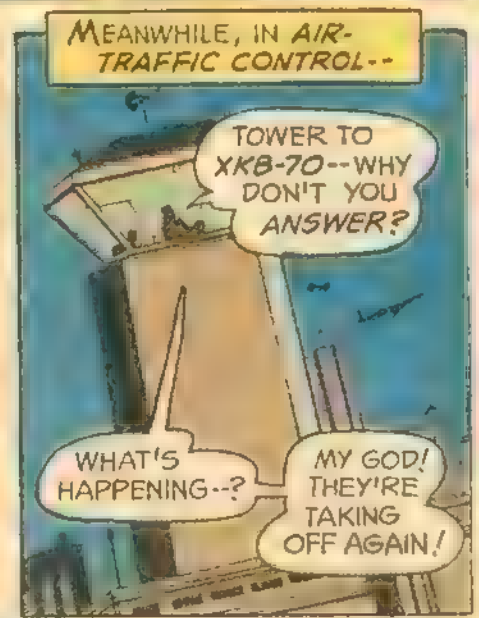


BUT-BUT--
THERE'S
ANOTHER
REASON--

NO WAY
TO STOP
THEM NOW!

I'LL HAVE
TO TAKE THEM
ONE AT A TIME!

QUIT
STALLING
--OR THE FLY-
ME CHICK
GETS IT
FIRST!



MEANWHILE, IN AIR-
TRAFFIC CONTROL--

TOWER TO
XKB-70--WHY
DON'T YOU
ANSWER?

WHAT'S
HAPPENING--?

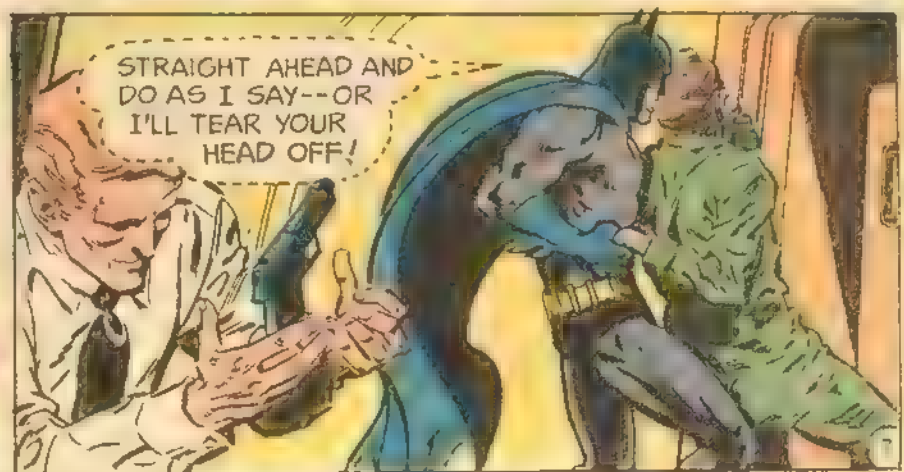
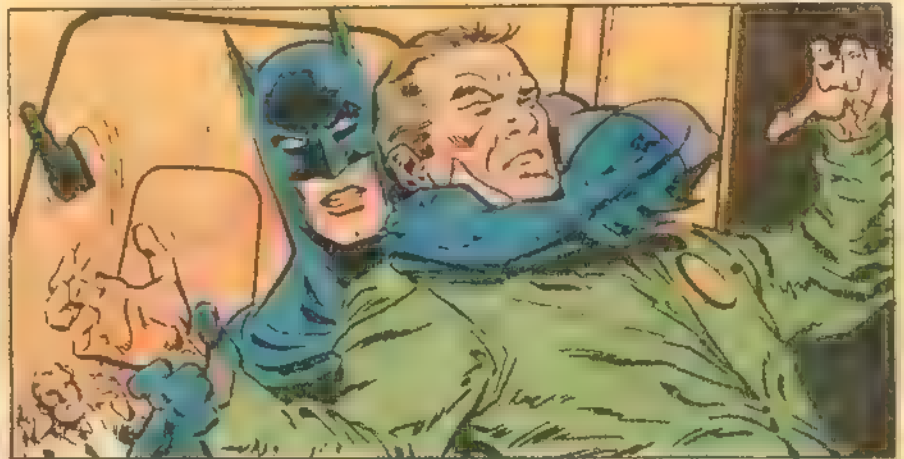
MY GOD!
THEY'RE
TAKING
OFF AGAIN!



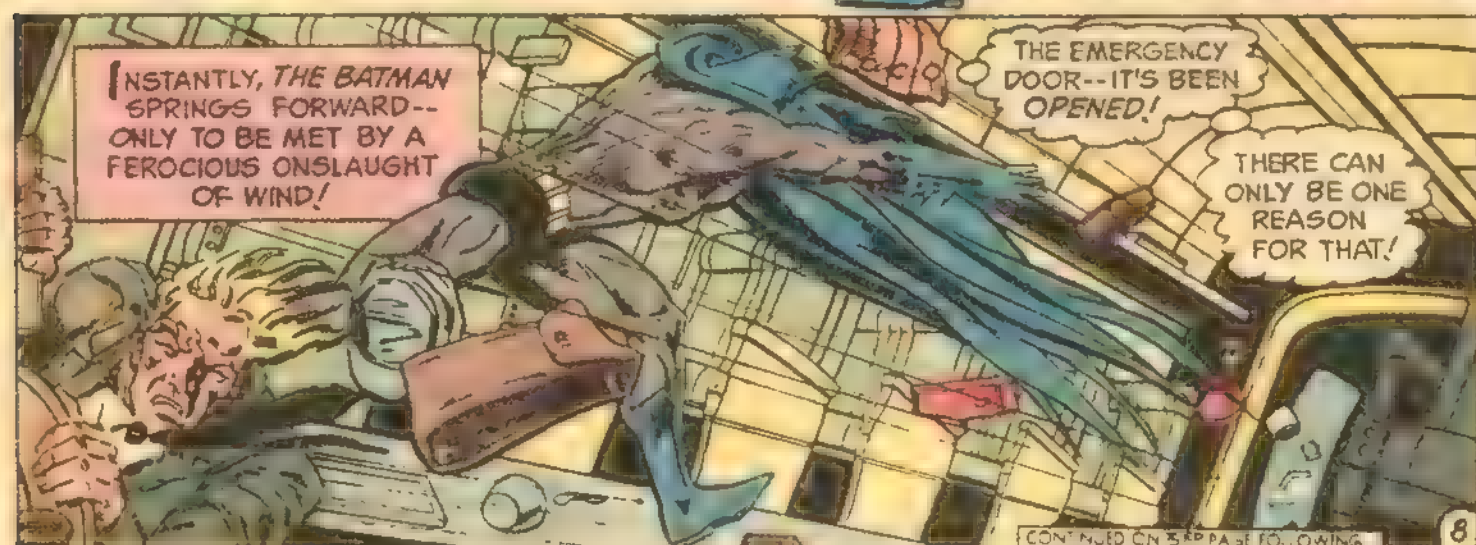
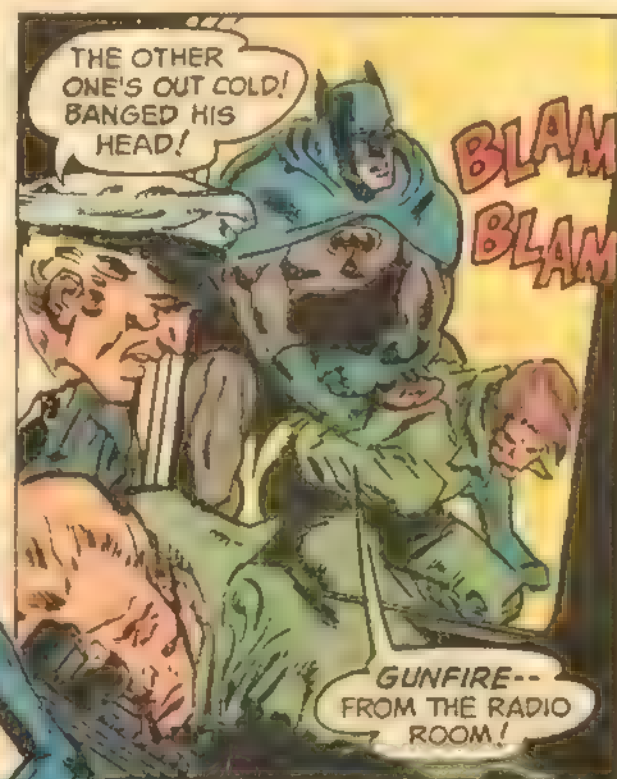
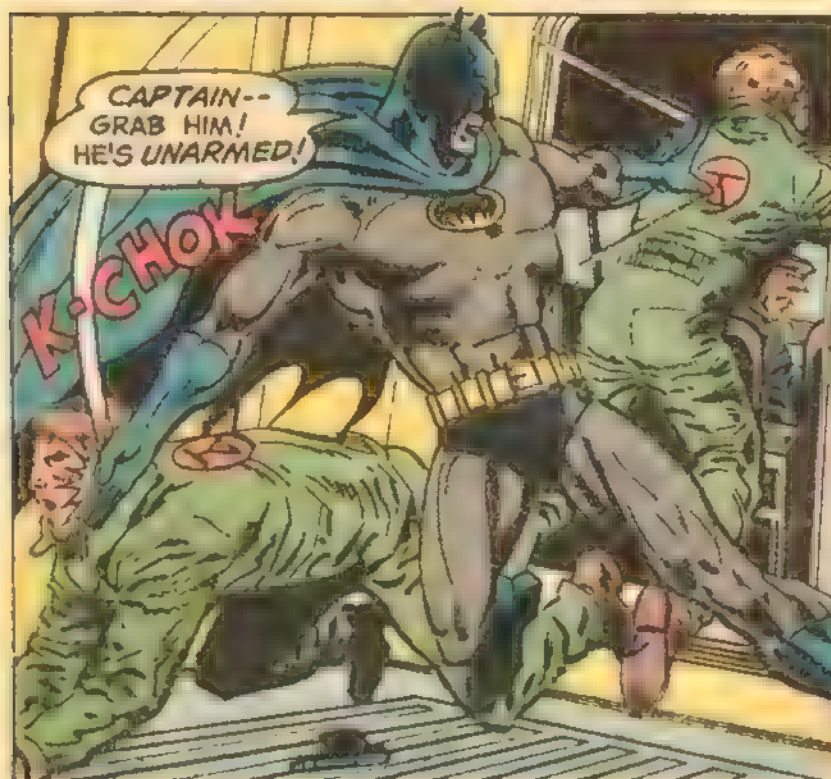
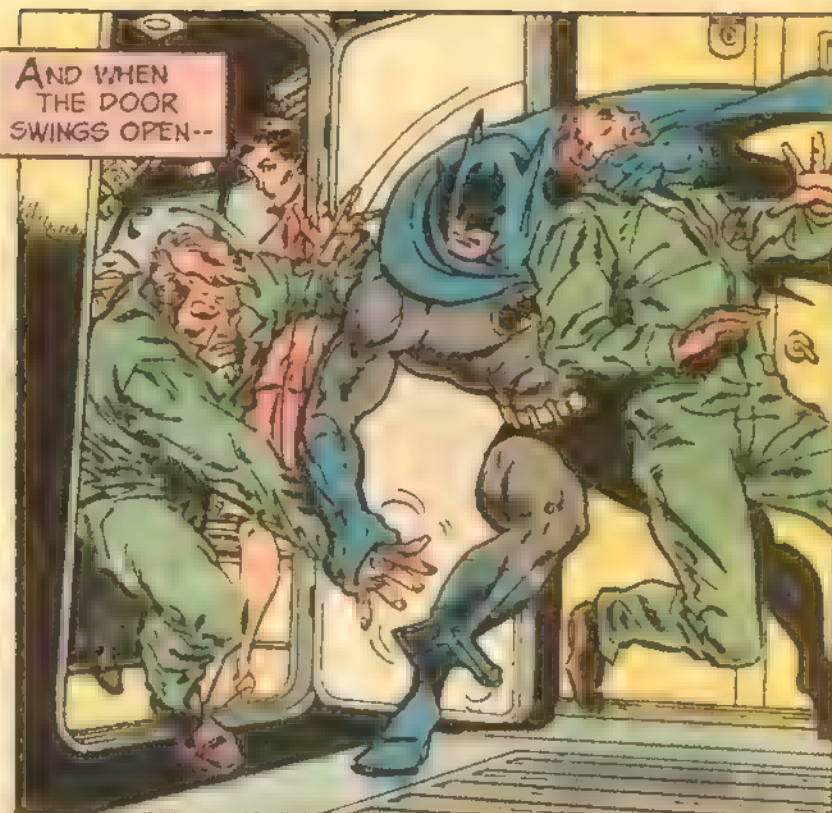
AS THE GREAT
PLANE IS AIR-
BORNE, THE MASKED
MANHUNTER GLIDES
SOUNDLESSLY
FORWARD TO THE
NAVIGATOR'S CABIN--

THIS HAS
TO BE DONE
QUICKLY...
AND
QUIETLY...

...IN TWO
STROKES!



STRAIGHT AHEAD AND
DO AS I SAY--OR
I'LL TEAR YOUR
HEAD OFF!



IMPOSSIBLE?

"Every successful bodybuilder has got to use the most advanced bodybuilding methods available—**UNIVERSAL BODYBUILDING** offers the best! Using **UNIVERSAL** methods, I have made excellent gains!"

Brian Eastman

NOT
FOR
THE
SUPER

BODYBUILDING SYSTEM!

**BE BETTER THAN THE BEST
BE DYNAMIC!**

AFTER

MOST MEN NEVER REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL FOR MUSCULARITY. Why? Probably because they've never come across or taken advantage of a training program quite like the one we offer here at **UNIVERSAL BODYBUILDING**. Our course has the **ULTIMATE MASTERPLAN** for **TOTAL BODY DEVELOPMENT!**

Very few men are satisfied with the way they look at present. They know themselves that they wouldn't mind having a **REALLY MASCULINE BODY** — one that will "turn on" the girls and make the guys envious.

WITH UNIVERSAL METHODS, YOU CAN BREAK OUT OF YOUR "OLD" SELF, AND TRANSFORM YOUR BODY INTO AN ATTENTION-GETTER!!! WE GUARANTEE TO IMPROVE YOUR BODY FAR BEYOND WHAT YOU'VE EVER BELIEVED POSSIBLE! We have perfected bodybuilding training techniques to the extreme, so that we can offer you the fastest gains possible. If you're thin and underweight, you'll be astonished at how quickly muscles appear. If you're overweight, we can help you to trim down the fat and replace it with rock-hard muscle. We'll tone up your abdominal area, and show you how to obtain a well-defined and impressive waist.

Add 2 or 3 inches to your arms, 4 or 5 inches to your chest — your rewards will be in direct proportion to your effort and accomplishments — nobody sets a limit to your success.

In the time it takes to complete this 12 lesson course, we can guarantee you a muscular foundation fantastic enough to be developed to your fullest potential! You can gain far more "improvement" with the Advanced Training Techniques included in this course. We can give you the firm, rippling, muscular body of a physique star! Send in for our **FREE COLORFUL BROCHURES TODAY** (fantastic information about our course — loaded with unbelievable photographs). You won't regret it!

**INSTANTLY—
YOUR MUSCLES
WILL BEGIN
TO GROW!**

BEFORE

BE GREAT—BE SOMEBODY SPECIAL!

Improve your health, self-confidence and your outlook on life as you become more muscular. Regardless of your age, height or present build, we'll help you build a fabulous body. Thousands of people have taken this course with fantastic results — why not you? Whatever you look like today, we can improve on it. We guarantee it!!!

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ ARMS — Develop big, powerful arms—the kind girls love to be held in! Command respect from everyone you meet. | ☐ SHOULDERS — Get rid of those puny shoulders! Instead, fill your shirts with bulging muscles! |
| ☐ CHEST — Is your chest sunken and unimpressive? No more! It's easy to build a massive chest. You can measure 45, 47, or even 50 inches! | ☐ LEGS — Put some muscle on those spindly legs! Muscular legs will give you extra power like you've never dreamed possible! |
| ☐ BACK — Develop your upper back, and get that outstanding "V-Shape!" Often within one week you'll be able to see that wedge formation begin to take shape — it's a real attention-getter! | ☐ ABDOMEN — Trim and hard — that's the way your abs should look. Get rid of your pot-belly. Improve your digestion, and get that washboard waist—all when you develop those abdominal muscles! |



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200 ARMY INSIGNIAS



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Made of gold plated metal with pin on back.
1 1/2" high.

Wind it up and wear it like a ring. Shake hands and watch your friends J-U-M-P! Place it on a chair — when they sit on it... they J-U-M-P the chair!

177 MONEY MAKER



Sensational!
Insert blank piece of paper, turn knob and **PRESTO!** — out comes a real do or bill. No skill required.

JOY BUZZER



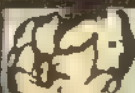
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All kits sent ppd. Via Air Mail. Live Delivery Guaranteed. Sea Horses, Dept. 5775 Box 342096, Coral Gables, FL 33134

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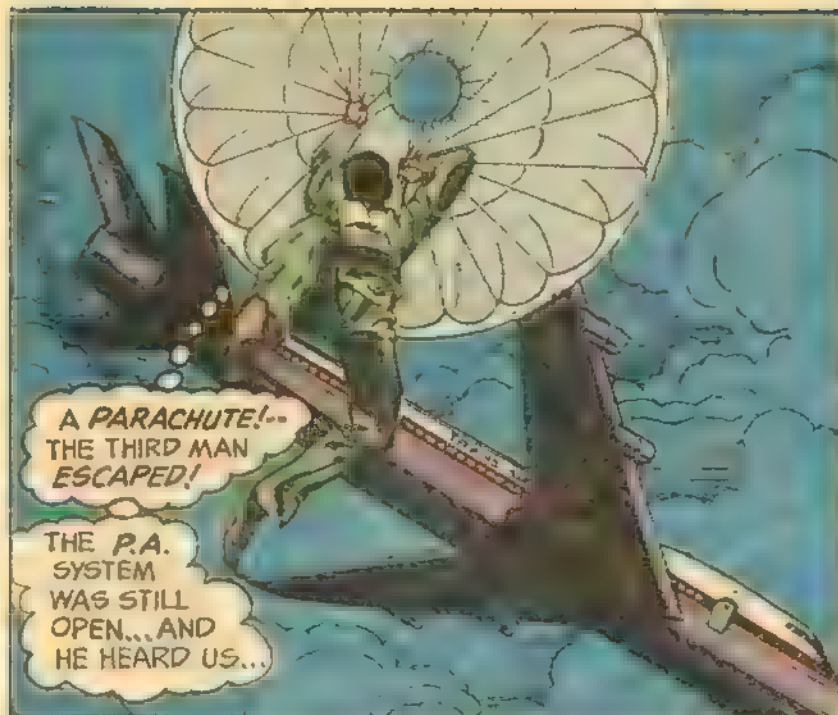


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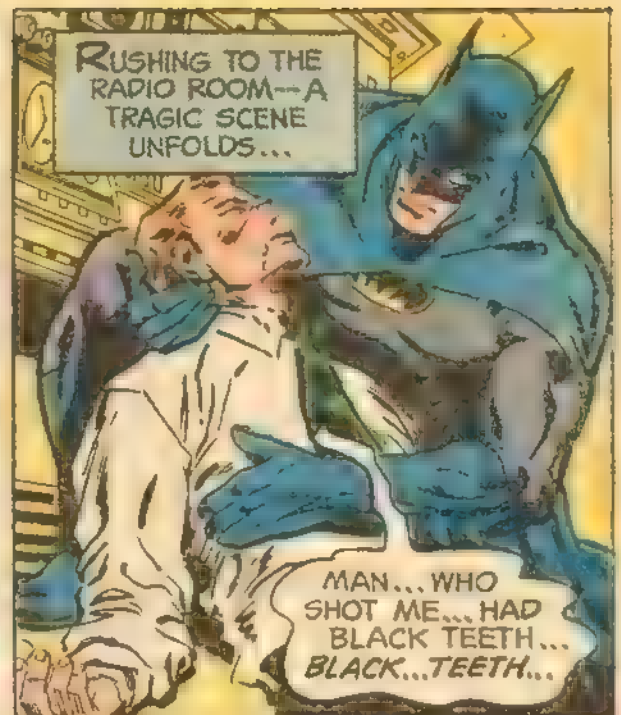
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ON FEBRUARY 11, 1969 a recording was found on a New York City elevator. It purports to have been recorded approximately 125 years from now. For copy, send \$3. to: The Record, Box 3011, New York, N.Y. 10008



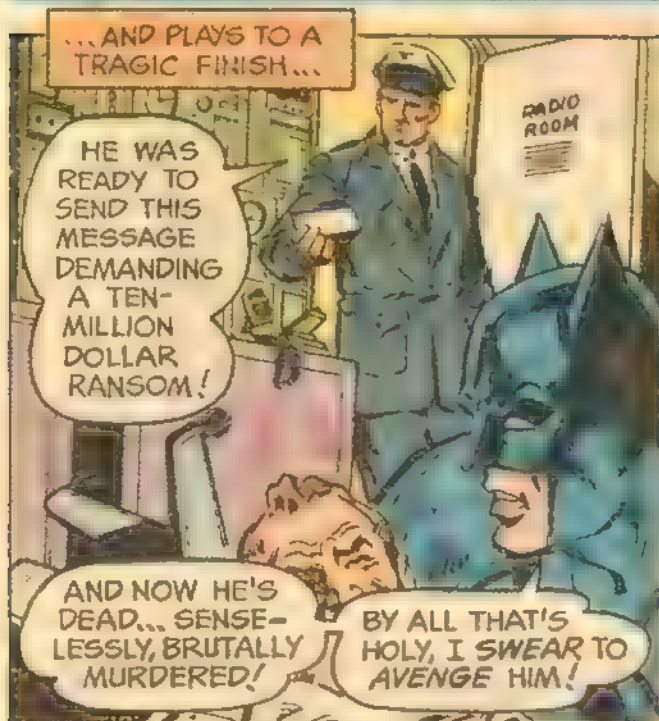
A PARACHUTE!--
THE THIRD MAN
ESCAPED!

THE P.A.
SYSTEM
WAS STILL
OPEN...AND
HE HEARD US...



RUSHING TO THE
RADIO ROOM--A
TRAGIC SCENE
UNFOLDS...

MAN...WHO
SHOT ME...HAD
BLACK TEETH...
BLACK...TEETH...

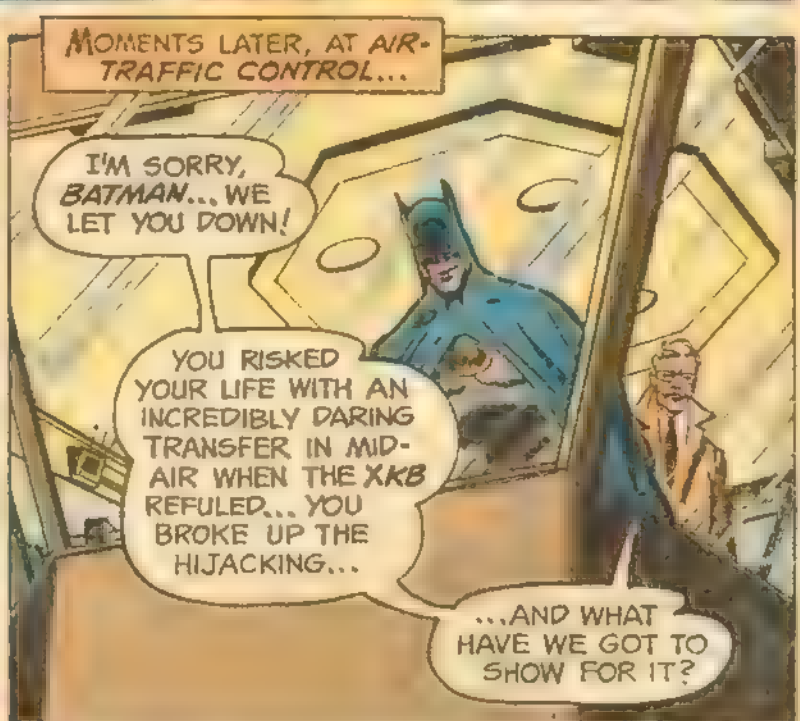


...AND PLAYS TO A
TRAGIC FINISH...

HE WAS
READY TO
SEND THIS
MESSAGE
DEMANDING
A TEN-
MILLION
DOLLAR
RANSOM!

AND NOW HE'S
DEAD...SENSE-
LESSLY, BRUTALLY
MURDERED!

BY ALL THAT'S
HOLY, I SWEAR TO
AVENGE HIM!

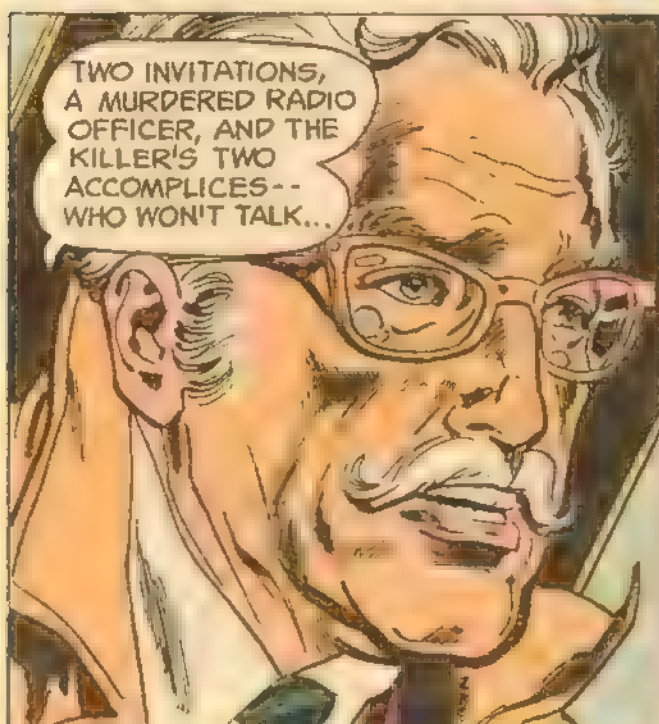


MOMENTS LATER, AT AIR-
TRAFFIC CONTROL...

I'M SORRY,
BATMAN...WE
LET YOU DOWN!

YOU RISKED
YOUR LIFE WITH AN
INCREDIBLY DARING
TRANSFER IN MID-
AIR WHEN THE XKB
REFUELED...YOU
BROKE UP THE
HIJACKING...

...AND WHAT
HAVE WE GOT TO
SHOW FOR IT?



TWO INVITATIONS,
A MURDERED RADIO
OFFICER, AND THE
KILLER'S TWO
ACCOMPLICES--
WHO WON'T TALK...



...BUT NOT THE
SLIGHTEST CLUE TO
THEIR LEADER--
THE MAN WITH
BLACK TEETH!

WHY DON'T YOU
SAY SOMETHING,
BATMAN?!

YOU'LL BE
HEARING FROM ME,
COMMISSIONER...

...WHEN I HAVE
SOMETHING
TO SAY!

THE WAYNE MANSION...
LONG DARK AND UNUSED...
EXCEPT FOR ITS EXTRA-
ORDINARY UNDERGROUND
FEATURE--THE BATCAVE...

MIGHT I ASK THE
PURPOSE OF THIS VISIT
HERE, SIR?

TO CONSULT
MY CRIME-FILES,
ALFRED... AND
I'LL NEED YOUR
ASSISTANCE!

SPLENDID,
SIR! I EXPECT
TO PROVE
INDISPENSABLE!

MASTER BRUCE!
SOMETHING HAS
ACTIVATED THE
THE RADAR-SONAR
ALARM--AND THE
SCANNER IS
INDICATING YOU!

OF COURSE
YOU'LL RUN THE
NECESSARY
TESTS?

OF COURSE,
ALFRED!

GOT IT!
SOMETHING
IN MY COWL--

-- SOMETHING
MORE THAN
MEETS THE
EYE!

DIABOLICAL!
ONE-TENTH THE
SIZE OF A
PINHEAD, WITH
A FANTASTIC
POTENTIAL!

A WORK OF GENIUS,
ALFRED, FROM A DAZZLING
CRIMINAL BRAIN!

PERHAPS, SIR
...BUT WHAT A
PITY HE'S
CHALLENGED
THE FINEST
DETECTIVE
OF OUR
DAY!

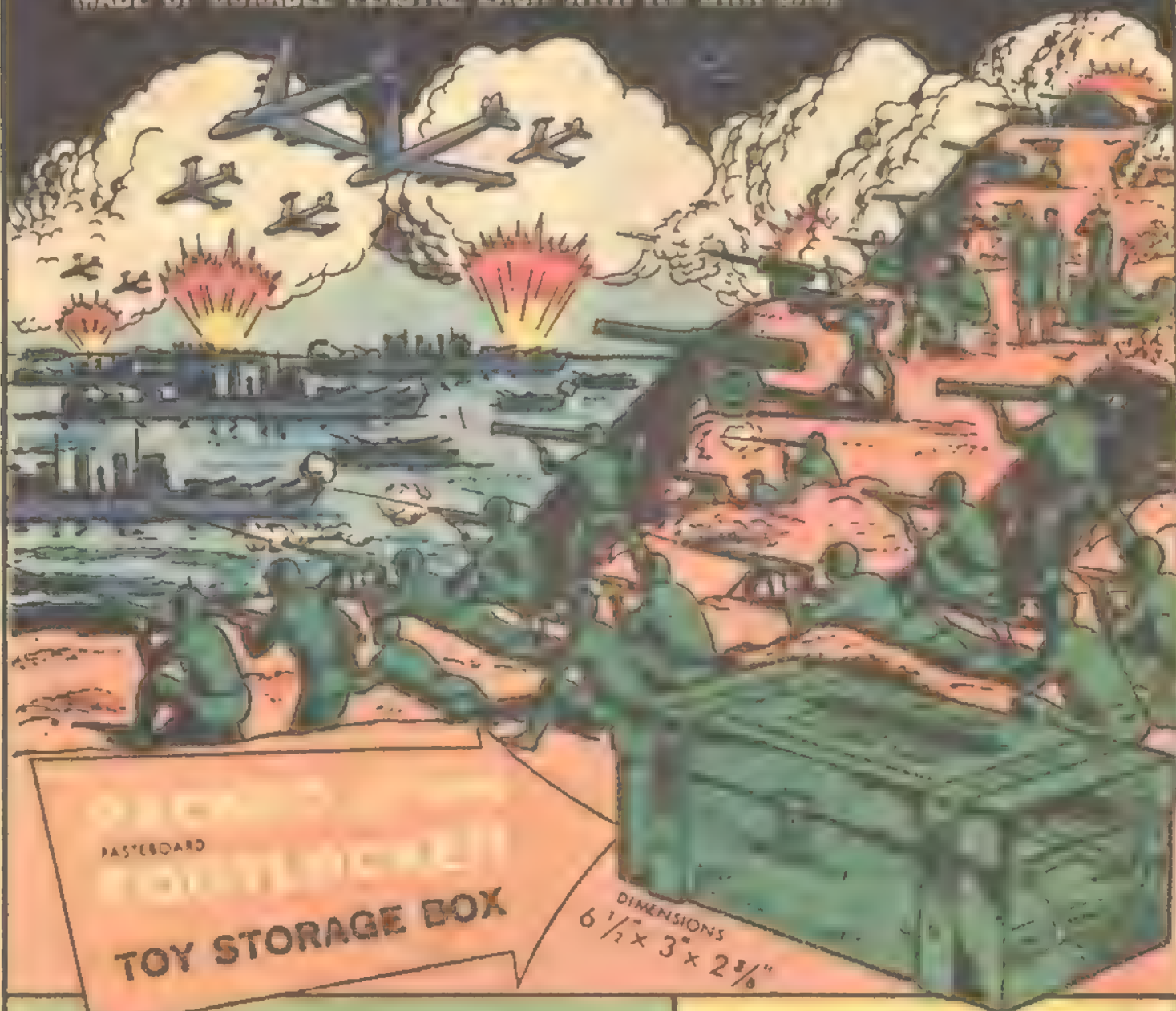
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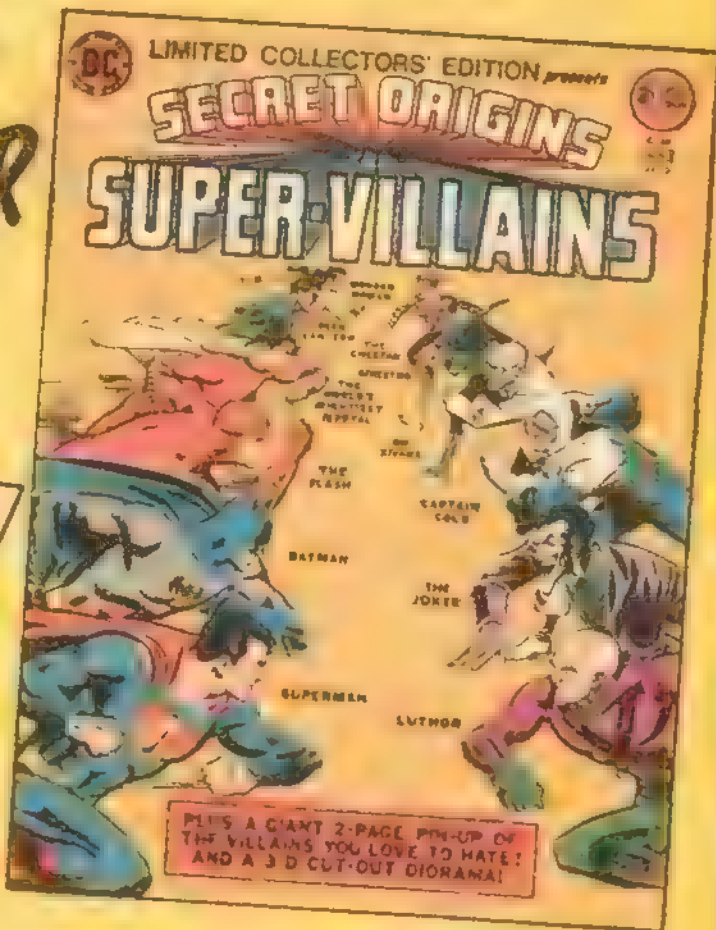
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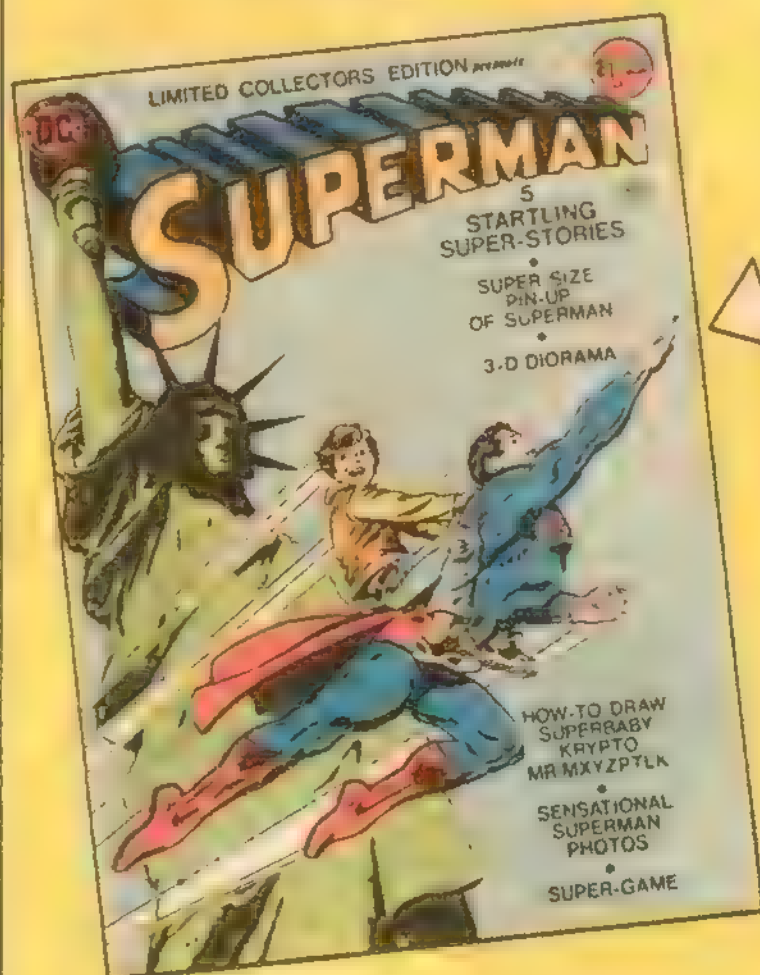
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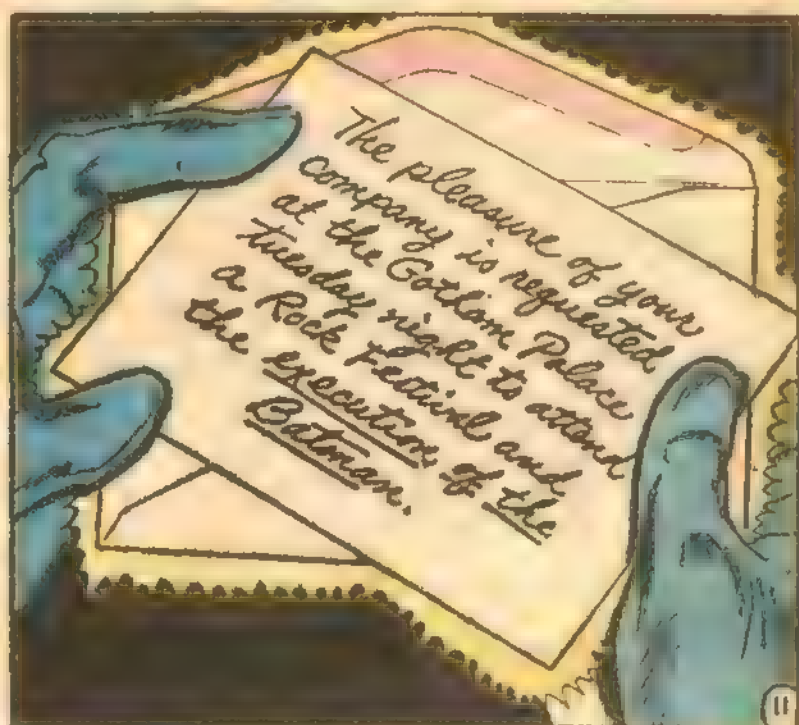
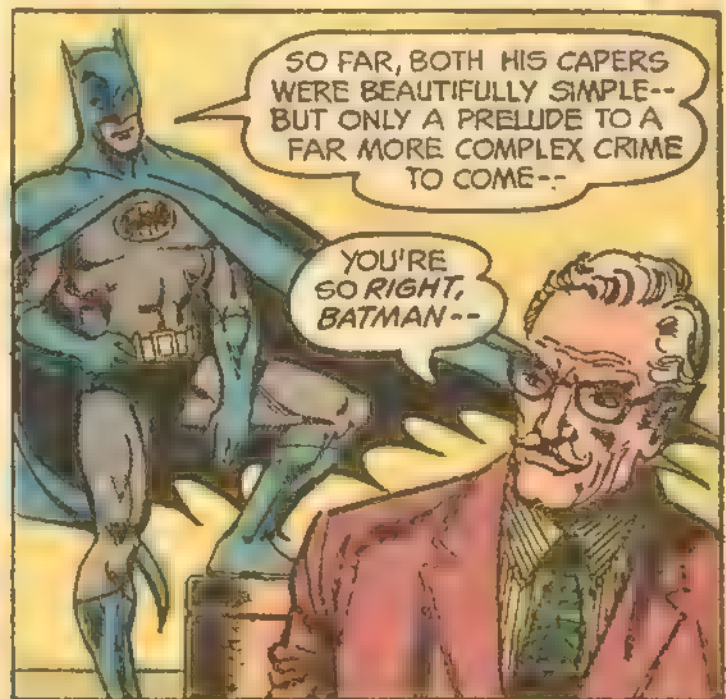
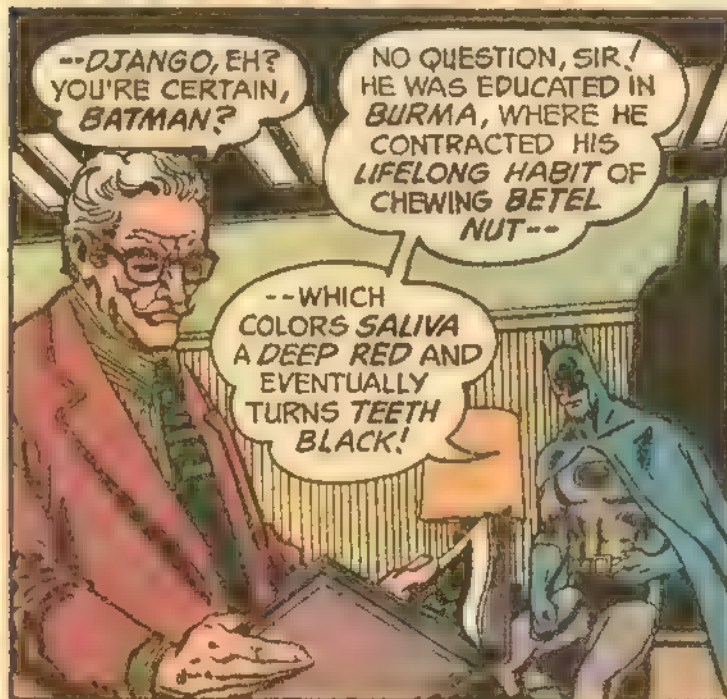
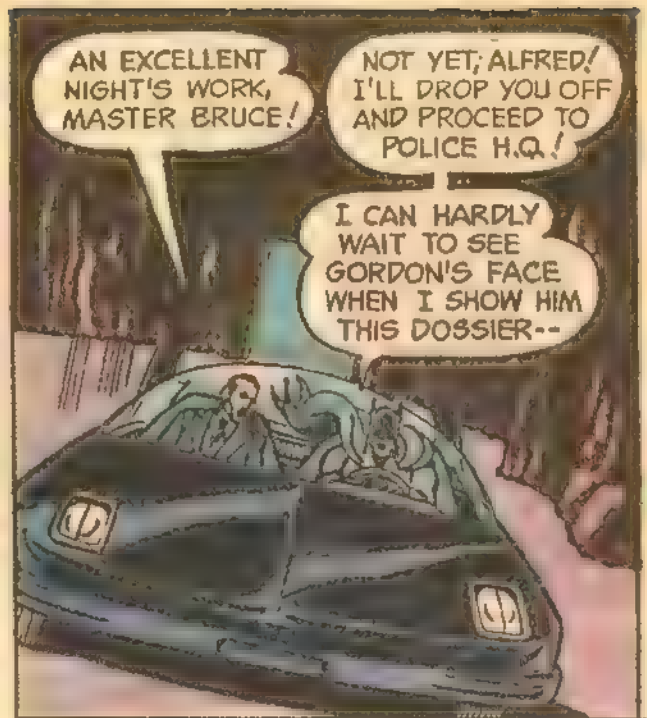
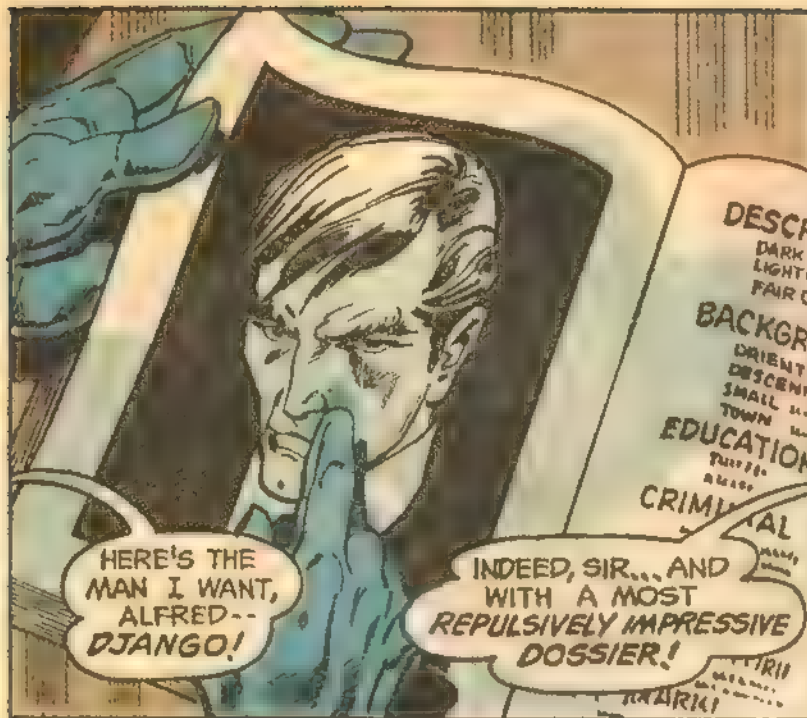
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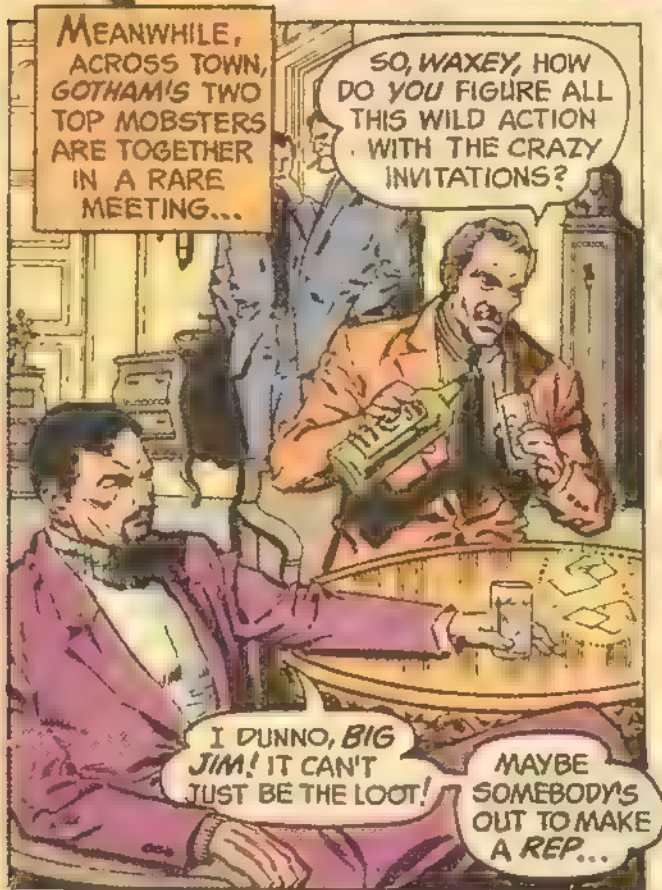
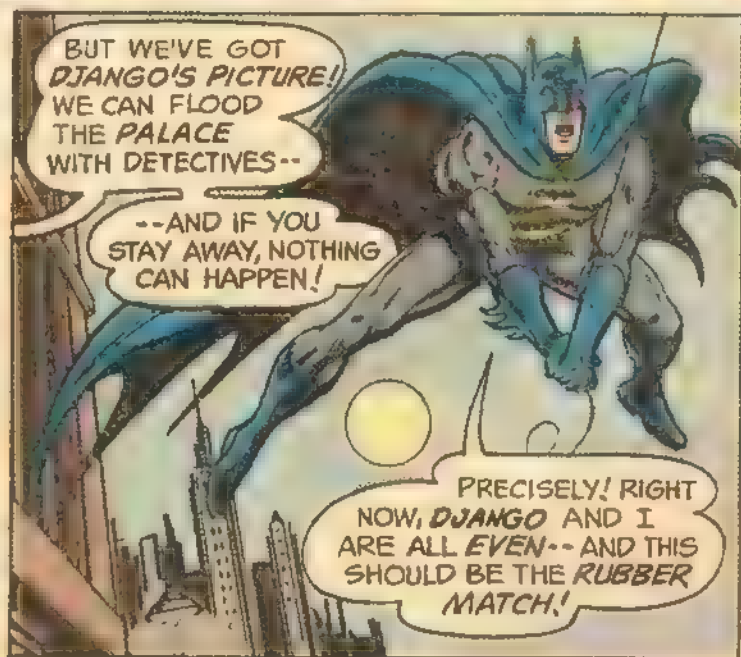
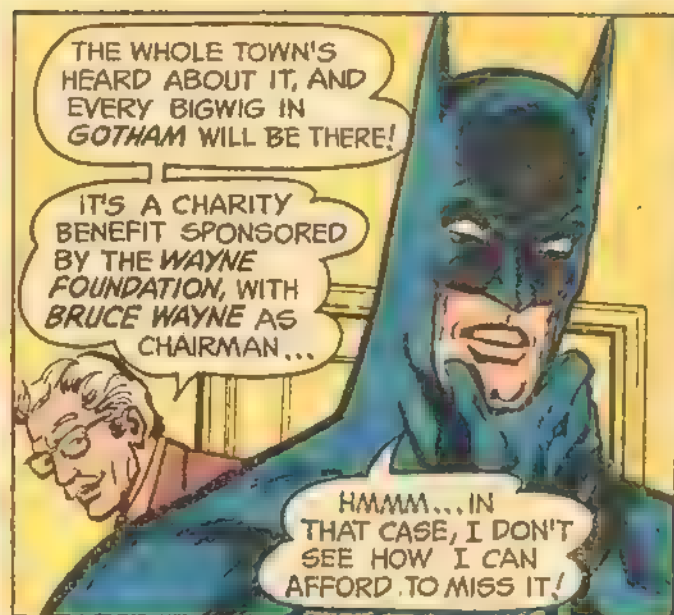
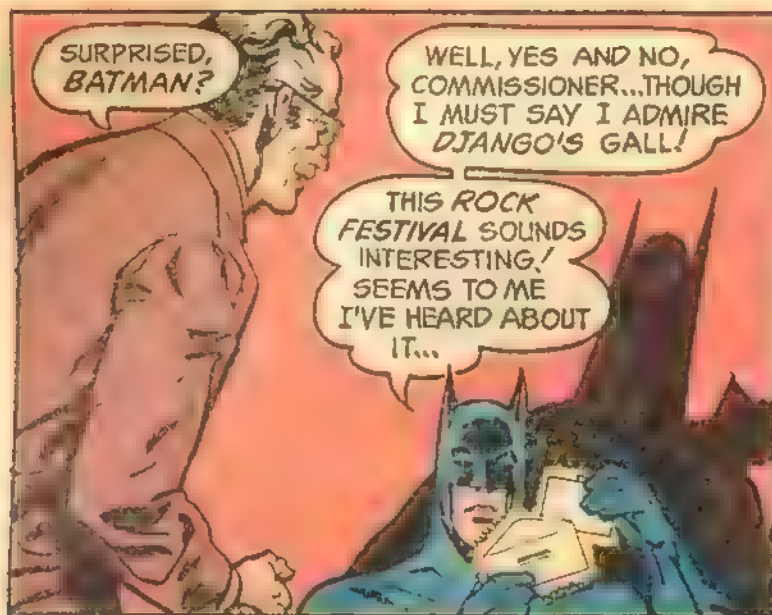
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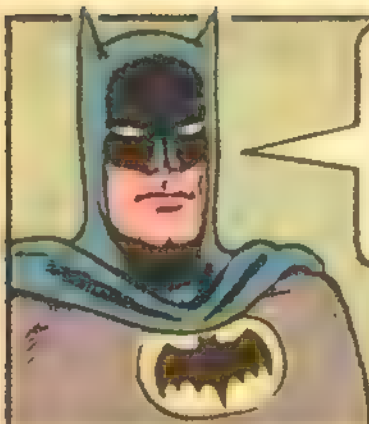
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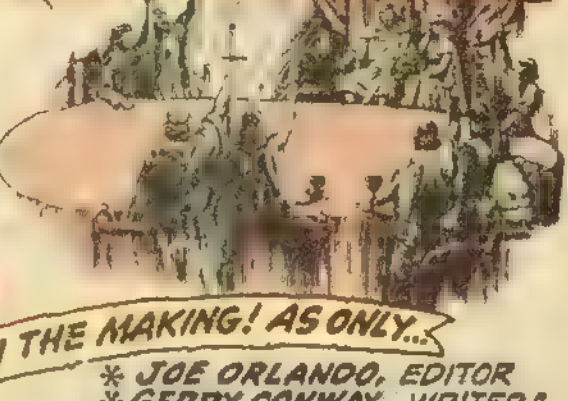
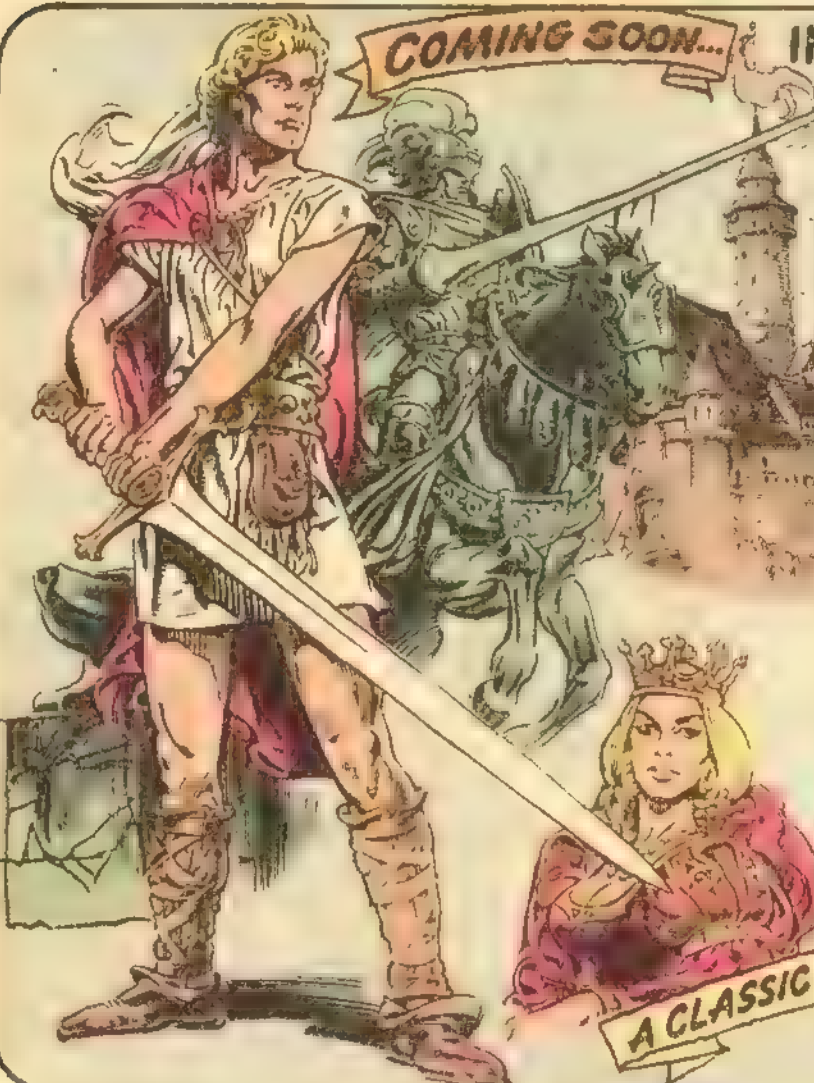
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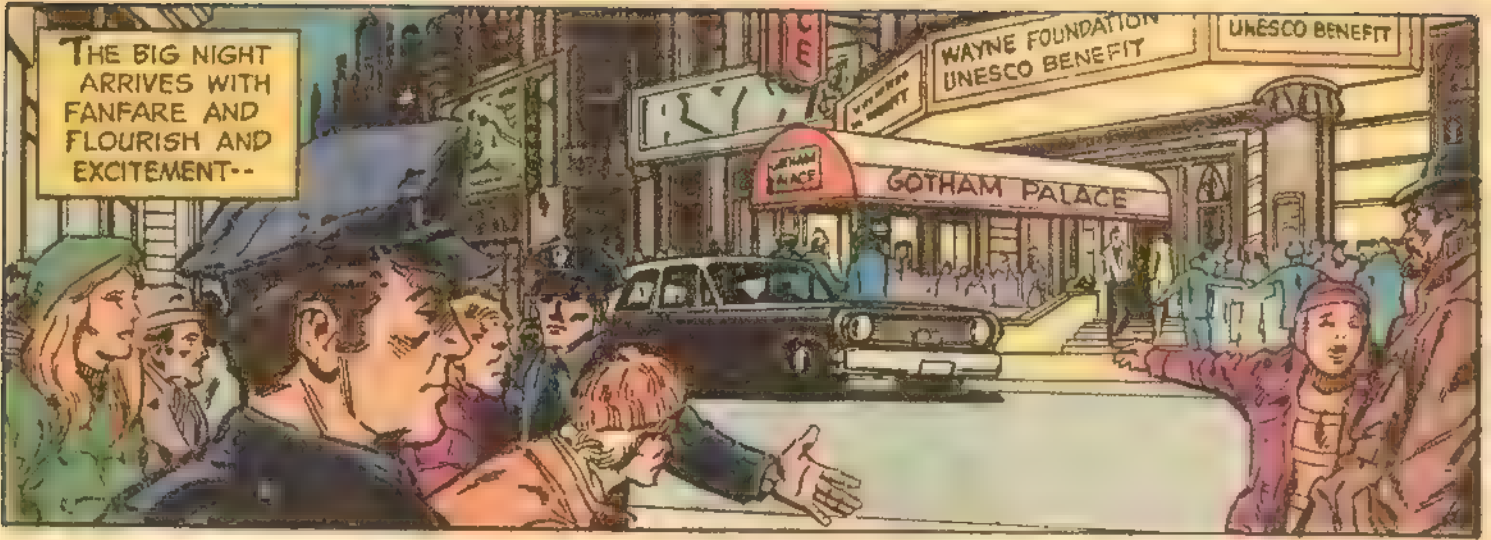
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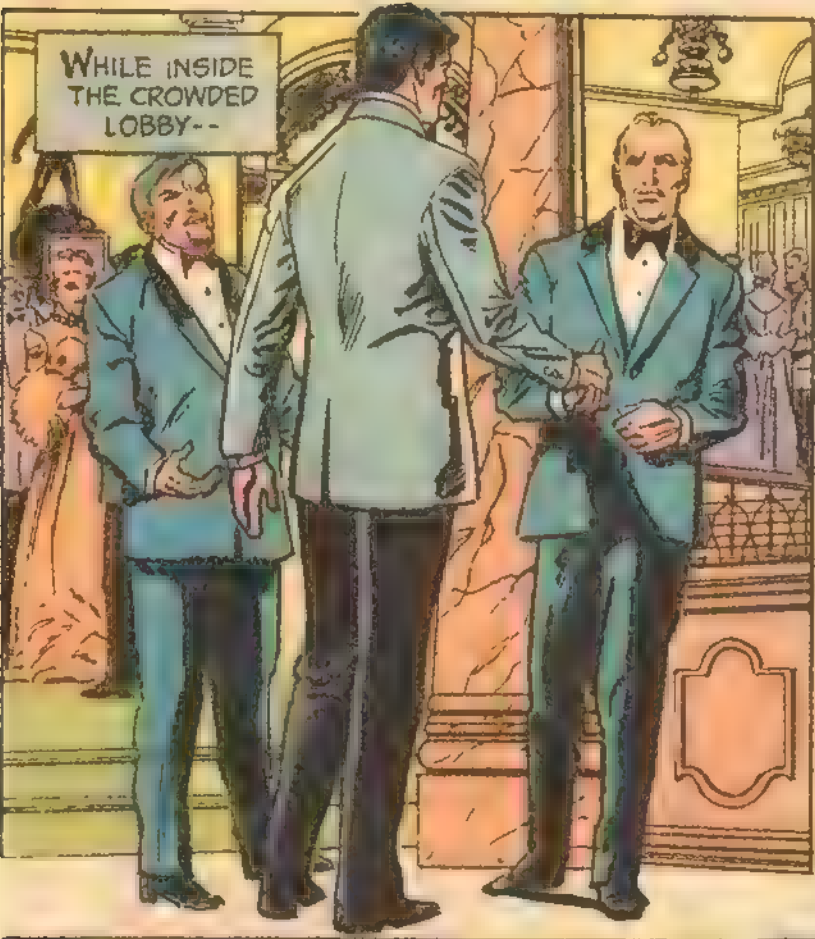
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* NESTOR REDONDO, ARTIST
COULD CREATE!



THE BIG NIGHT ARRIVES WITH FANFARE AND FLOURISH AND EXCITEMENT--



WHILE INSIDE THE CROWDED LOBBY--



LOOK AT THAT, COMMISSIONER!--BRUCE WAYNE GLAD-HANDING WAXEY KRUGER AND BIG JIM CODY!

DOESN'T HE KNOW WHO THEY ARE?

PROBABLY NOT... HOW MANY PEOPLE WOULD?

I'D BETTER TALK TO WAYNE...



REALLY, COMMISSIONER? IS THAT WHO THEY WERE? HOW EMBARRASSING!

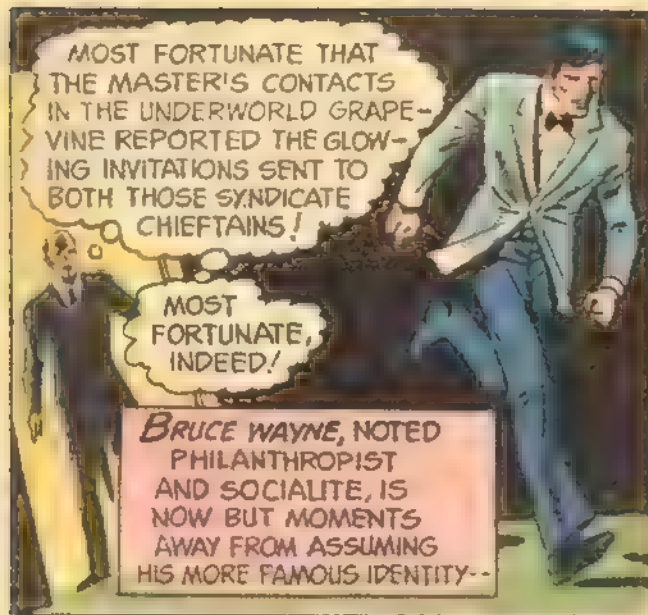
YOU MUST EXCUSE ME-- MY MAN ALFRED SEEMS TO WANT ME...



OKAY, ALFRED! I'VE TRANSFERRED THE TICKETS DJANGO SENT TO BIG JIM CODY AND WAXEY KRUGER TO YOUR POCKET!

YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?

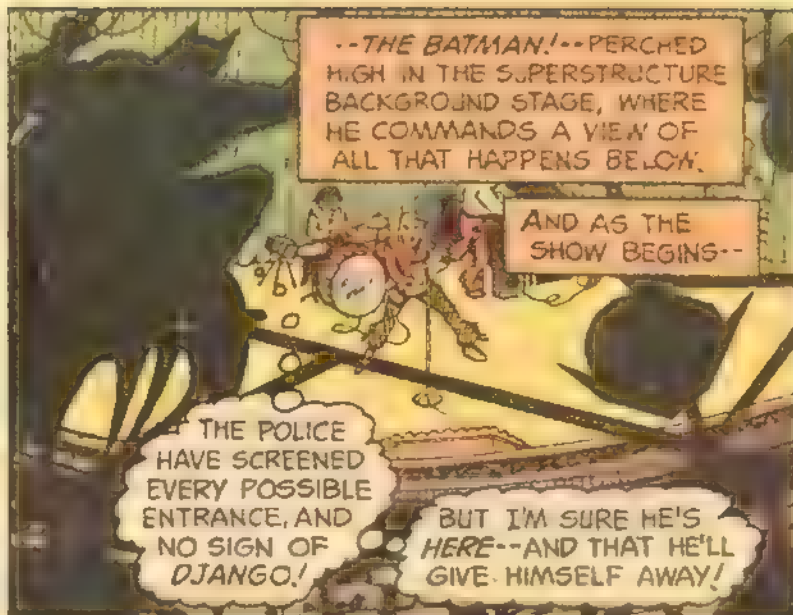
INDEED I DO, SIR--AND THE SOONER THE BETTER!



MOST FORTUNATE THAT THE MASTER'S CONTACTS IN THE UNDERWORLD GRAPE-VINE REPORTED THE GLOW-ING INVITATIONS SENT TO BOTH THOSE SYNDICATE CHIEFTAINS!

MOST FORTUNATE, INDEED!

BRUCE WAYNE, NOTED PHILANTHROPIST AND SOCIALITE, IS NOW BUT MOMENTS AWAY FROM ASSUMING HIS MORE FAMOUS IDENTITY--



--THE BATMAN!--PERCHED HIGH IN THE SUPERSTRUCTURE BACKGROUND STAGE, WHERE HE COMMANDS A VIEW OF ALL THAT HAPPENS BELOW.

AND AS THE SHOW BEGINS--

THE POLICE HAVE SCREENED EVERY POSSIBLE ENTRANCE, AND NO SIGN OF DJANGO!

BUT I'M SURE HE'S HERE--AND THAT HE'LL GIVE HIMSELF AWAY!



DEAFENING APPLAUSE FILLS THE PACKED THEATER AS GROUP AFTER GROUP TAKES THE STAGE--UNTIL...

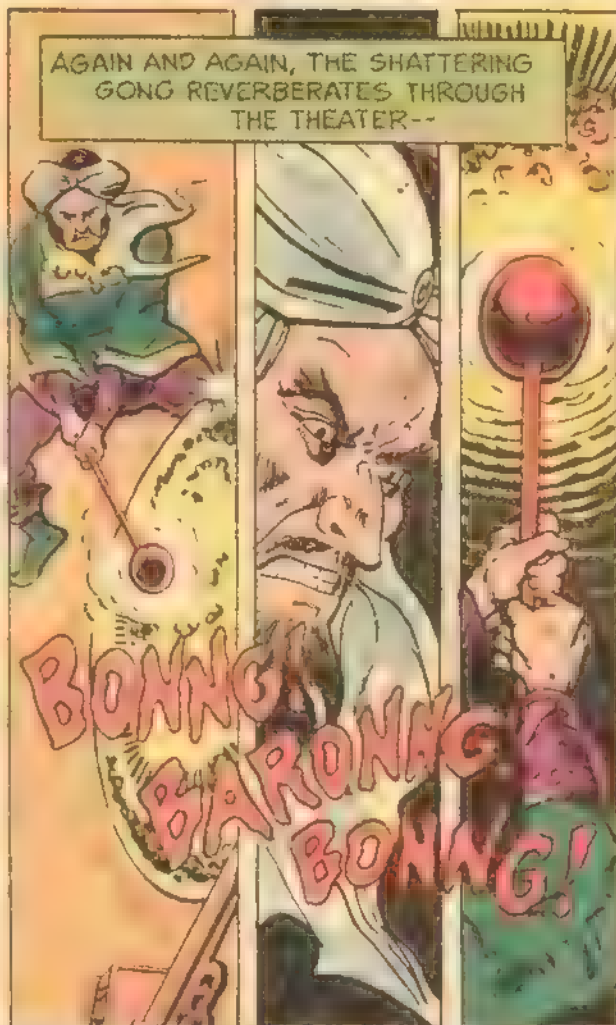
THE WHIRLING DERVISHES--A MOST UNUSUAL COMBO, WITH MOST UNUSUAL INSTRUMENTS!

THIS COULD BE IT!



AS THE MUSIC REACHES A CRESCENDO--

I'M RIGHT! --THAT WAS IT!



AGAIN AND AGAIN, THE SHATTERING GONG REVERBERATES THROUGH THE THEATER--

BONNG! BARONNG! BONNG!



--AND THE WHIRLING DERVISHES TAKE THEIR BOWS-- ALL BUT ONE!...

HIS MURDEROUS TRAP HAS GONE KAPUT-- SO NOW HE KNOWS I'M ONTO HIM...

...WHICH MEANS ESCAPE-TIME FOR DJANGO!

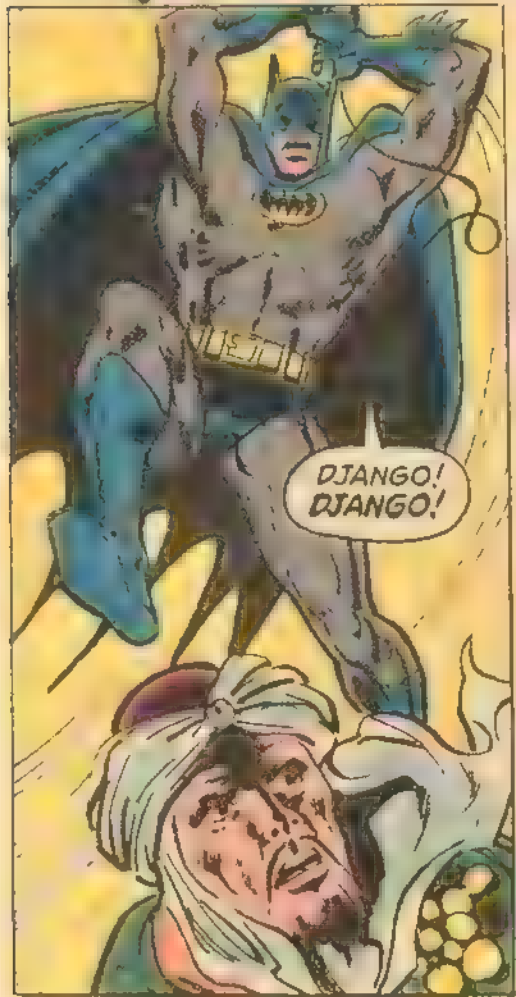


IF I TAKE HIM IN PUBLIC, IT MIGHT VERY WELL RUIN THE CONCERT... AND BRUCE WAYNE WOULD NEVER FORGIVE ME!

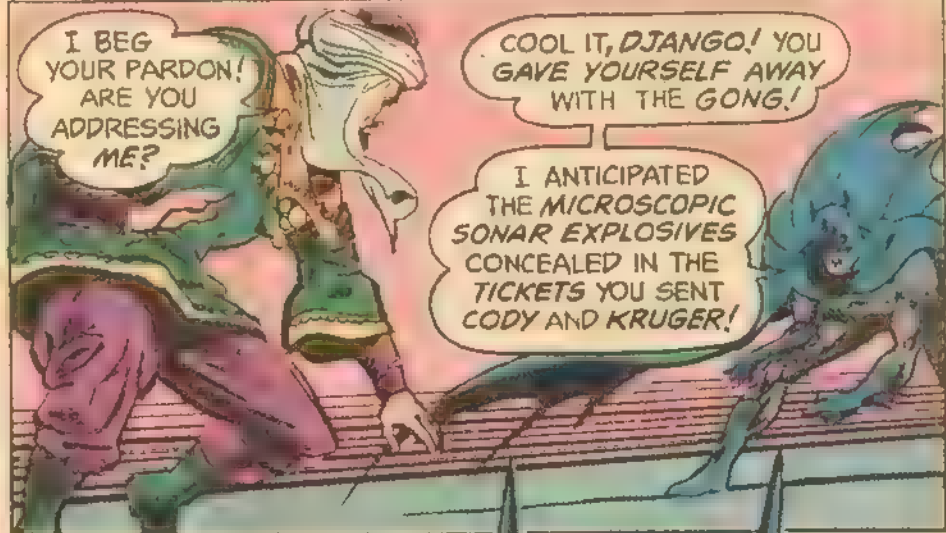
SO I'LL JUST FOLLOW AND SEE HOW HE HOPES TO MAKE IT OUT OF HERE, WITH EVERY EXIT COVERED!



A PAINTED WALL!--A STAGE-SET!



DJANGO!
DJANGO!



I BEG YOUR PARDON! ARE YOU ADDRESSING ME?

COOL IT, DJANGO! YOU GAVE YOURSELF AWAY WITH THE GONG!

I ANTICIPATED THE MICROSCOPIC SONAR EXPLOSIVES CONCEALED IN THE TICKETS YOU SENT CODY AND KRUGER!



THEY WERE SET TO DETONATE ON THE GONG'S VIBRATION-FREQUENCY... BUT I HAD THEM DEACTIVATED!

NOW OFF WITH YOUR DISGUISE-- BEFORE I DO IT FOR YOU!



WHY NOT? FEAST YOUR EYES, BATMAN!

WE'LL CHALK UP ANOTHER VICTORY FOR YOU--BUT ONLY A MICROSCOPIC VICTORY!

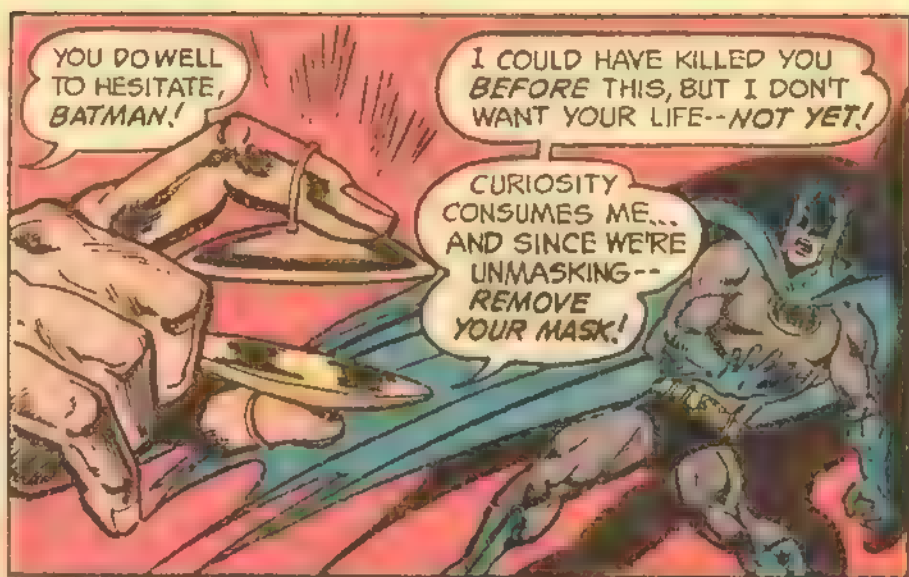


NOW GAZE AT THESE FINGER-CYMBALS!

STUDY THEM CAREFULLY, BATMAN...THEY'RE PRIMED FOR YOUR PROMISED EXECUTION!

SHOULD I STRIKE THESE CYMBALS, YOU BLOW SKY-HIGH!

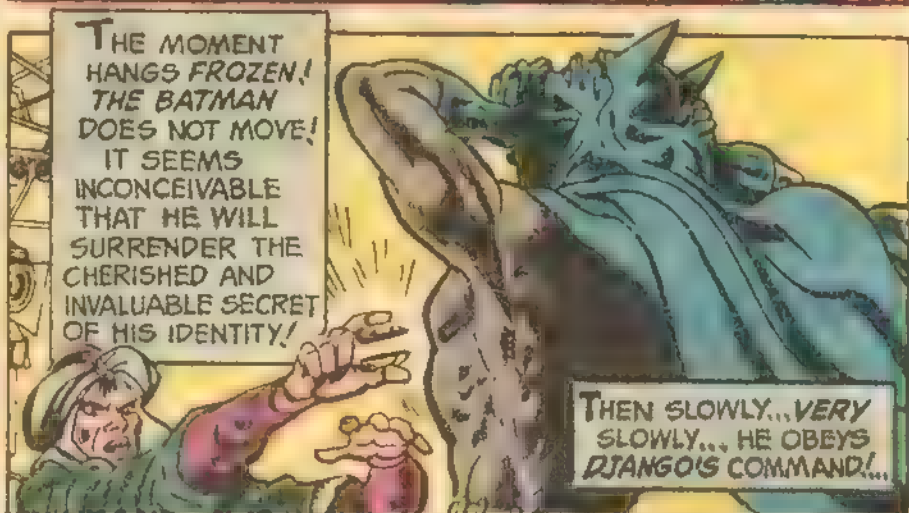
DO YOU DARE TEST ME?



YOU DO WELL TO HESITATE, BATMAN!

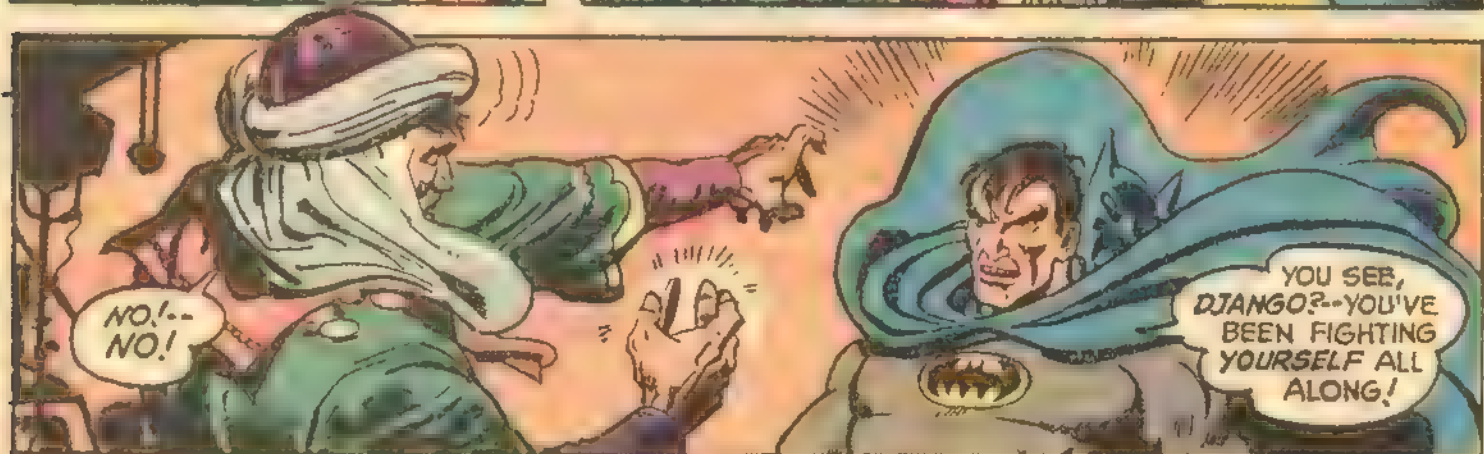
I COULD HAVE KILLED YOU BEFORE THIS, BUT I DON'T WANT YOUR LIFE--NOT YET!

CURIOSITY CONSUMES ME... AND SINCE WE'RE UNMASKING-- REMOVE YOUR MASK!



THE MOMENT HANGS FROZEN! THE BATMAN DOES NOT MOVE! IT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE THAT HE WILL SURRENDER THE CHERISHED AND INVALUABLE SECRET OF HIS IDENTITY!

THEN SLOWLY...VERY SLOWLY... HE OBEYS DJANGO'S COMMAND!

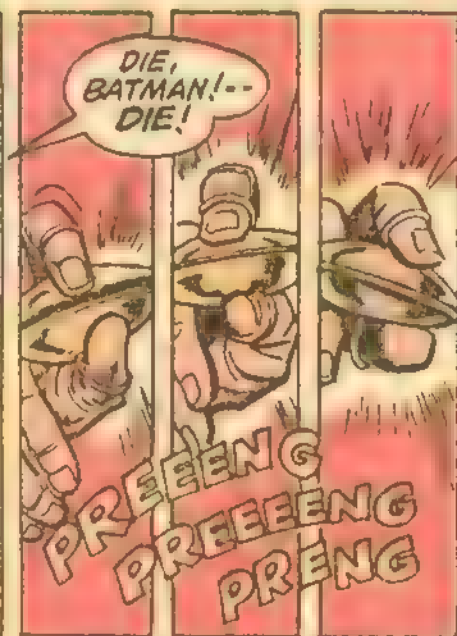


NO!-- NO!

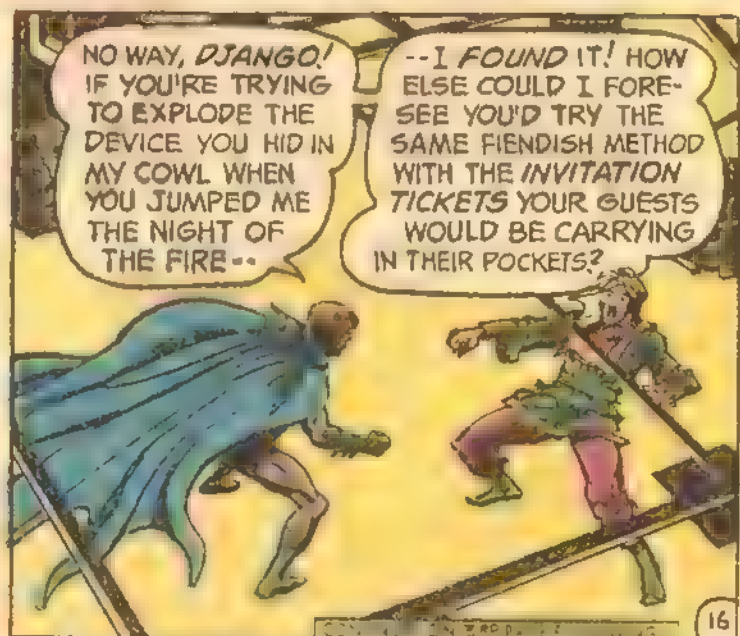
YOU SEE, DJANGO?--YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING YOURSELF ALL ALONG!



DIE, BATMAN!-- DIE!



PREEENG
PREEENG
PREENG



NO WAY, DJANGO! IF YOU'RE TRYING TO EXPLODE THE DEVICE YOU HID IN MY COWL WHEN YOU JUMPED ME THE NIGHT OF THE FIRE--

--I FOUND IT! HOW ELSE COULD I FORE-SEE YOU'D TRY THE SAME FIENDISH METHOD WITH THE INVITATION TICKETS YOUR GUESTS WOULD BE CARRYING IN THEIR POCKETS?

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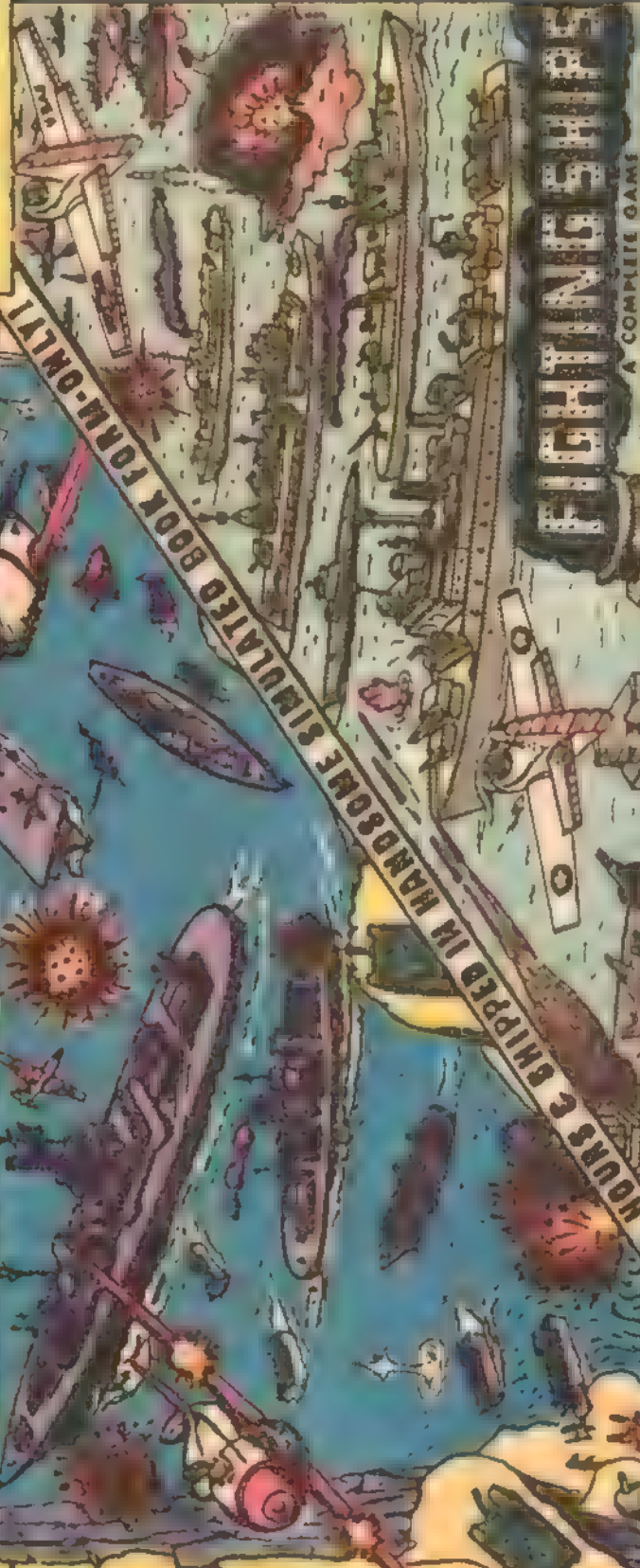
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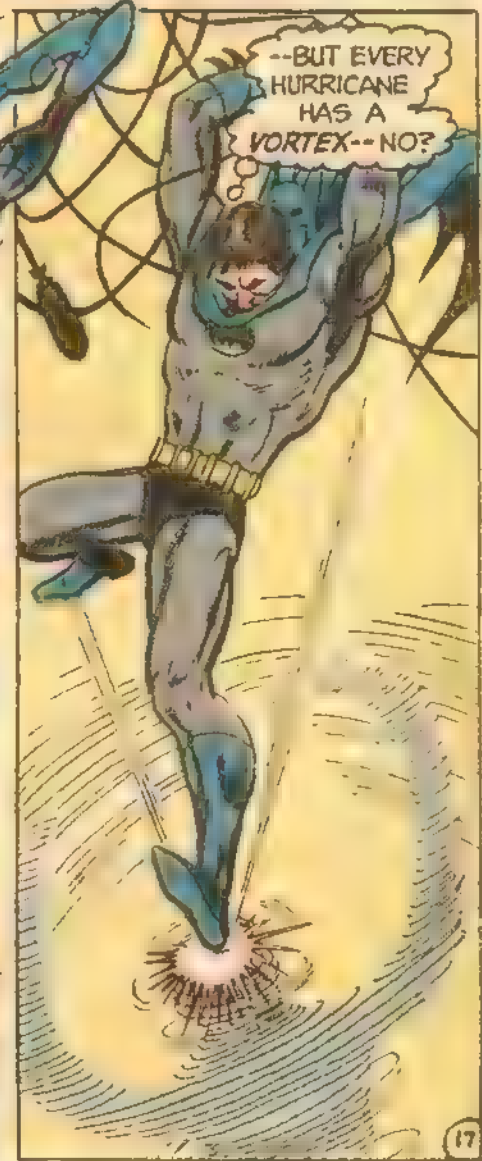
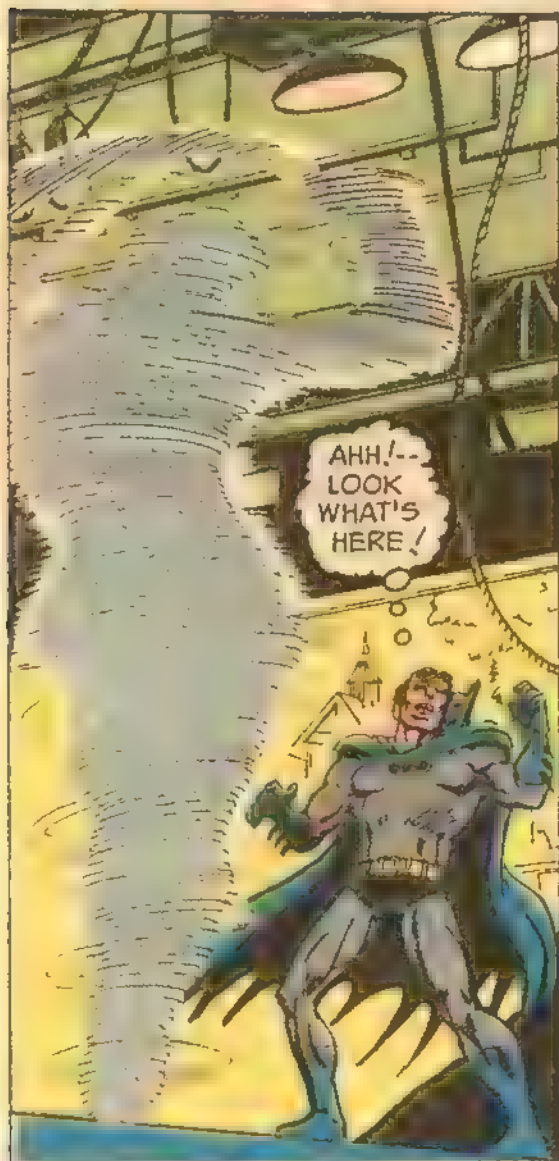
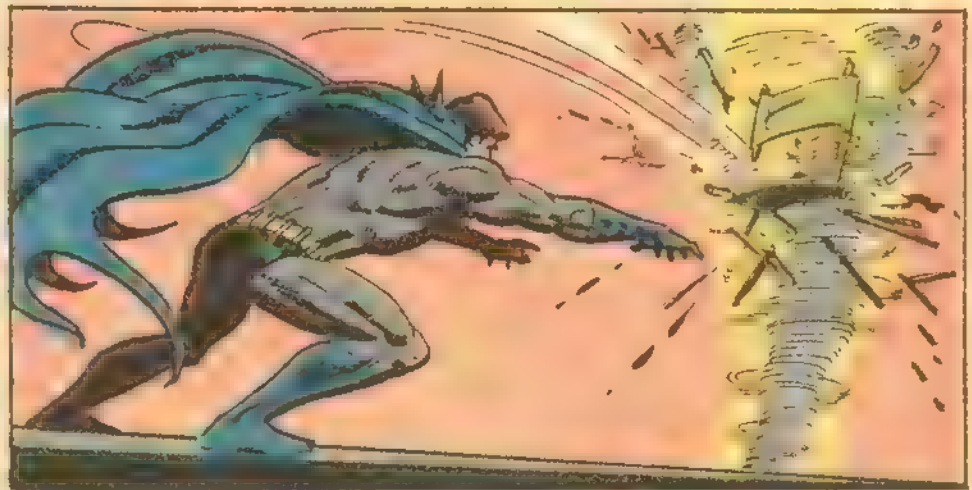
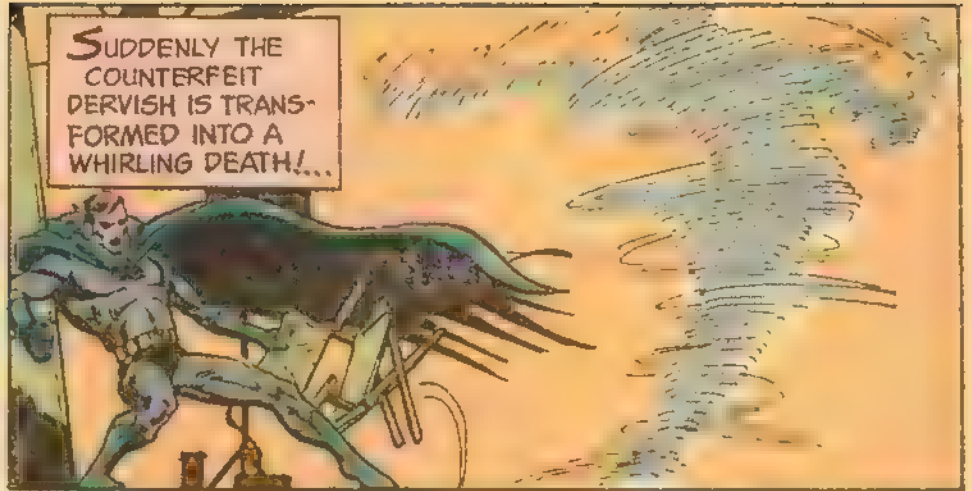
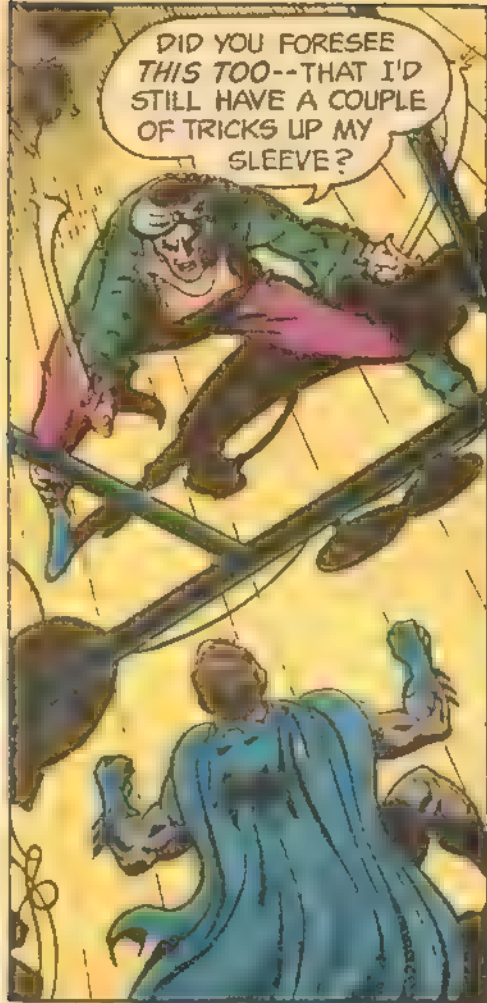
GERRY CONWAY • STEVE DITKO & AL MILGROM!

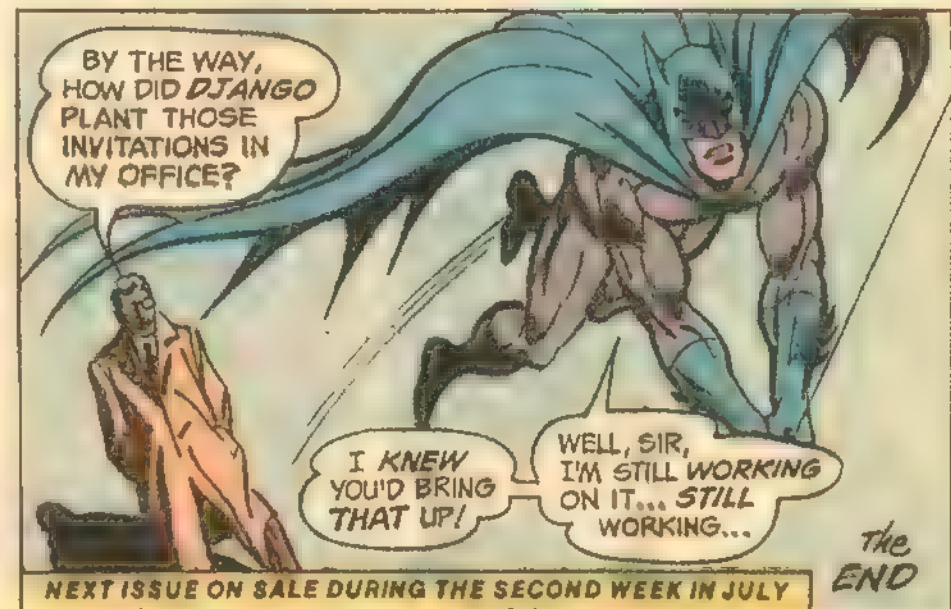
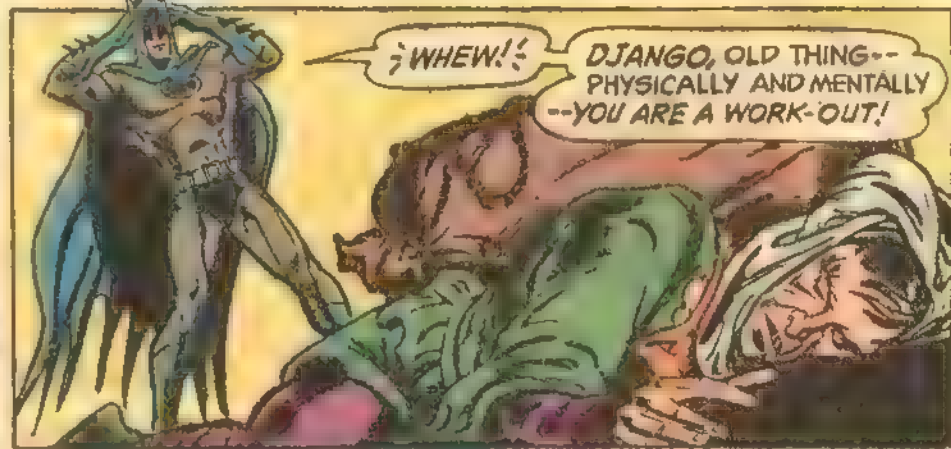
AND WATCH FOR THREE MORE FROM CONWAY'S CORNER:

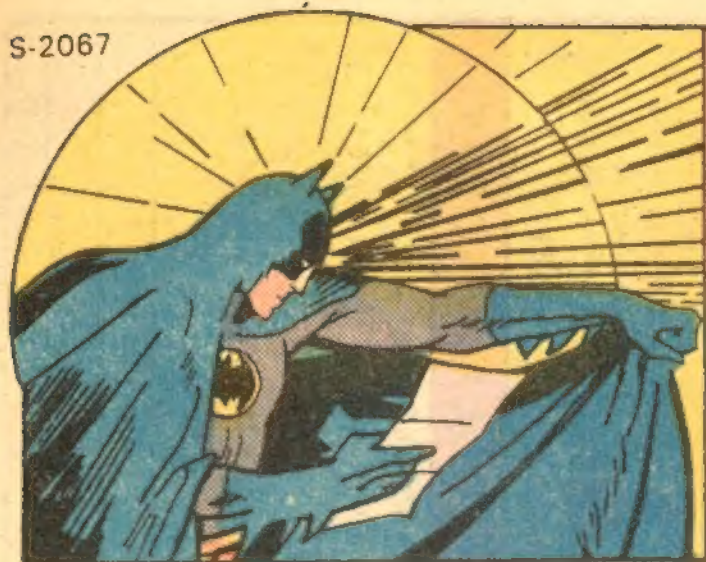
ALL-STAR
CONWAY

BLACKHAWK

CODE
NAME: **ASSASSIN**







LETTERS to the BATMAN

c/o NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.,
75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019.

Dear Mr. Schwartz:

Batman #263's "Riddler on the Move" was, in many ways, a pleasant surprise! Denny O'Neil set up his perspective on the Riddler on page 5 and from that point on, the character was real to me. To be blunt, Edward Nigma is a full-fledged nut! He's a resigned obsessive with properly heavy remorse. His strength and cunning, too, are wholly appropriate. Unlike Catwoman and Penguin, he is not silly, trivial or out-dated . . . just criminally insane.

Denny's little touches made this an issue to remember. When was the last time we saw a Whirlybat? Batman's phone call "entrance" on page two was unique and brilliant. Even the riddles were appropriate and logical!

Artwise, I think I'm falling in love with the Ernie Chua-Dick Giordano team as they grow together. Ernie's flair for perspective and camera-angles has never been so clear. Heads popping in and out of panels, floor-up views, odd panel arrangements . . . things other artists have done before, but without the sacrifice of character and storytelling.

Thank you for your continuing excellence. Double your frequency, double your fun . . . BATMAN is the only comic to also double its excellency!

ROGER KLORESE, Brooklyn, NY

(It also doubled the letters of praise, Roger, so let's move on to our second would-be psychiatrist's analysis of the enigmatic Riddler's personality!—BR)

.

Dear Julie and Company:

Denny O'Neil has given us a truly remarkable characterization. His portrayal of Edward Nigma as a psychotic plagued by a compulsive mania was vividly and realistically presented. This mania is a deep-rooted fixture in the Riddler, caused by a sub-conscious respect for authority manifested by Batman and a desire for punishment. Perhaps he was denied a proper punishment-reward childhood and therefore his respect for authority demands punitive measures for his acts against it. Hence, his compulsive use of the riddle trademark.

"Riddler on the Move" has given us a Batman who does not recognize the Riddler as the same malevolent force manifested in The Joker or Two-Face, nor does he treat him as such. That is why

the story worked. Had we been given the avenging Batman—the ultra-efficient machine dedicated to an obsessive destruction of evil—the Riddler would have been far overmatched. Instead, Batman is played as a human capable of being rendered hors de combat, and the result was a masterpiece of scripting and art.

ERIC M. MAHR, Williamsville, N.Y.

(Rather than delve "Mahr" deeply into the Riddler's psychosis, our next correspondent prefers to tackle the source, the story itself!—BR)

.

Dear Editor:

The premise of a criminal employment agency was interesting, but, though it was talked about throughout "Riddler on the Move", we never got to see it in operation. The story seemed contrived, lacking the tension and grimness a good Batman story needs, and showed no signs of subtlety. The plan to kidnap the giraffes to prevent exposure of the Riddler's Giraffe house hide-out was so unbelievable, it left the impression that the story line was twisted to fit the riddle. The Prince of Puzzles claimed to have a plan of genius, but I saw none here, only poor writing!

DWIGHT SWANSON, San Bruno, Cal.

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Dear Editor:

The Batman is DC's most adaptable hero, able to fit into whodunits, realistic crime thrillers, supernatural chillers, science-fiction and costumed villain capers. BATMAN #263 proves he can handle comedy as well. The Batman is still the dark figure of retribution, but this time his appearances from nowhere are given a comic tinge. He not only tries to overcome the Riddler in a physical battle, but in a battle of comic wit as well. Batman the wit can be as interesting as Batman the silent avenger and it's nice to see both.

To my surprise, Denny's jokes and riddles were very clever and the Riddler's new habit of giving money to other riddlers is nicely amusing. The story became one great delightful puzzle as I joined in unscrambling the riddles and the riddle-like death-trap.

In closing, a riddle: What does my letter have in common with a hurricane? Answer: They're both long-winded!

PETER SANDERSON, Milton, Mass.

(Not necessarily, Peter, if you know why your letter is like an overlong piece of pipe—both can be cut to fit! Don't like that one, huh? What goes on sale in early July and features a new villain called The Sheikh in "Murder Masquerade"? Simple, BATMAN #268!—Bob Rozakis)

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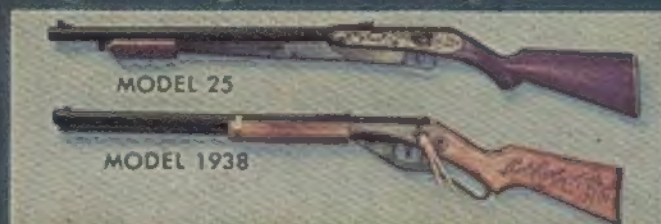
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